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NSEEN SAVE OF SOLITUDE

BY

ROBERT CARIVEAU

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UNSEEN SAVE OF SOLITUDE

BY

ROBERT CARIVEAU

BOSTON
RICHARD G. BADGER
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1906

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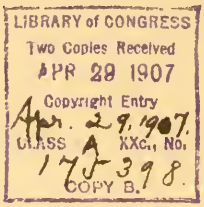

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To the American Muse of Poesy who will either acclaim or disclaim me, I affectionately inscribe this my first volume of verse.

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UNSEEN SAVE OF SOLITUDE

Unseen save of Solitude,
Unsought save in surmise
Thro' a veil of Dreamings viewed,
Unsaid, unsung, it lies
Betwixt the golden gates
Of Dawn and Day
Where hold high sway
The Destinies, the Fates,
The Faery clan,
The shepherd Pan,
Queen Mab and Oberon;
Where mists Auroraean
Of purple and gold
Protect from mortal gaze the mold
Of Loveliness and Miracle.
Knowest thou this scene
Of sweet serene?
'Tis the realm of the Beautiful.

ODES

TO MUSIC

I

What sole enchantress haunts thy magic strings?
  What Genii of imagery attend?
What Magian betakes himself to wings?
  What heralds of spent ages deftly wend
Here their spurred heels? Because my soul's distraught
I crave thy sure response. I crave but aught
    Of courtesy. I crave that thou
    Mayst answer even now
These surges turbulent of dreams unsought!

II

Whence issues this delicious harmony?
  What Dolphin-borne Arion ventures thus?
What maelstrom of viewless melody
  With amorous strength incarnates Orpheus?
Behold upon the treasure-wasteful seas
The Buccaneer his flag flout to the breeze;
    And looms the form of Eric Red,
    And as of legions dead
Time's erewhile baldrick, bright with mysteries.

III

Where is thy wand? Who blooms this Pastoral scene?
  Are these the faméd dells of Arcady?
The lowing flocks? The peaks of blue serene?
  The mountain snow-flowers? Ah, perhaps they be

The Alps Helvetian, or mayhap the sheen
Of rustic visions of the fancy seen
In vales near pleasant Gascony:
The silent ecstacy
Of evening cool adown the Dordogne-green.

IV

Oh, I could die on these soft symphonies,
And float on Death's most argent pinions—
To poignant sorrow making a surcease,
One likewise to old Envy's minions,
And rid be of Gloom's mitre: for of earth
What mortal suffers not the troublous dearth
Of Honor? Take your lusty lute
O Orpheus lest mute
And mundane Morbidness make mad my mirth!

V

Music, sweet Music, breathe thy madrigals;—
Of love, of passion, breathe; in sooth, what not?
A stilly stream, a gushing silver falls,
A world of foliage, a reposeful grot;
Sing of the Saxon kings renowned of old,
Of Spartan, Roman, knights and warriors bold;
The Moors' Alhambra; ever serve
The Artist; with reserve
Sing all, breathe all, and more thou dost unfold!

TO AN EGYPTIAN MUMMY

Dedicated to the Egyptian mummy in the Public Library Museum, Minneapolis, bearing this inscription: "This mummy is that of a man, Amenhotsp, and dates from a time about the period of the Ptolemic rule in Egypt, 328-30 *B. C."*

Ages are on thy head thou heir of Time!
  Thou dumb historian! Thou embalméd son
  Of realms Egyptian! If generations gone
Shall nevermore bespeak thee, how can Rhyme,
Rhyme, but a poet's garland for a day—
  Or Music, Painting, or the Phidian art
  Find ears and eyes for thee and throbbing heart
While here the relique of an olden past ye lay,
Immovable as unimpassioned clay?

From out the Urn of the Dark Ages stalks
  Ashless yet bloodless, like a marble ghost
  Haunting old Grecian ruins, this, the boast
Of crumbled dynasties! O were thy walks
Near pyramids? near sphinxes? near the Nile?
  And Loves, how many! on green, ancient eves
  Whispered the Tender Passion thro' rose-leaves?
Perhaps thou even basked in Cleopatra's smile;—
Yet where's one soul to tell our afterwhile

Of thou or thine? or of the Ptolemy?
  Thou who in airy mirage saw arise
  Such scenes as mock'd description; did thine eyes
Besides Saharan wastes or the Red Sea,
Or Mediterranean, feast them hard upon
  Castles and unsubstantial ships? Didst thou
  Rest thee in oases? or guide a plow

Thou form! through fertile fields at Oriental
dawn?
To Palestine or Araby hadst gone?

Where god Osiris kept his sovran See
Whilst Memphian Priesthood offered sacrifice
In temples gorgeous as was pagan vice—
Wert thou a worshipper? When Mystery
Shrouded with clouds, approach'd the sage, whose
ken
Straightway, bedreamed, caught Angels from the
skies
Sweet, beautifully so,—what human ties
Were thine? What joys? What griefs? What
hopes?—ye mortal men
Must Art but fade like flow'rs Elysian?

Silence is deaf; thou art! both deaf for aye;
But if thy brethren, who, with cassia, myrrh,
And balsams, sought to save thy spirit, were
Returned to question thee, shouldst thou not say:
"Death is Art:"—Art, Deity? Like even thee
(Tho' with a touch of Beauty) shall this verse
Surviving—what? a hand within Time's hearse
Become a silent voice, a Voice, Humanity
That thou mayst heed when I no longer be.

ON OCEAN

I

Ocean, how vast, how imperturbable
Thy majesty! Nor anything withal
Need cope with thee! Thou dost appall
Conjecture! What thunderous anthems roll,
Or pæans born of billows leap awry

Spurning all Air, and Lethargy, and Sight?
Ocean, tumultuous, crowned with woven white
Some mighty Titan, unsubmissively
Seems in thy heart: One pauses wondrously
At thine immensity!

II

Of hidden lore, dost thou untiring boast?
Could not thy deeps most awful tales betray?
Of maudlin riot? Willful mutiny?
Most like, far und thy rock-bound coast
Under the watery dungeons hollow delved
A hoard exhaustless, lies: The pirate gold,
Barbaric gems, and savage treasure old,
Who fain might guess? Also the pageants shelved
Of coral reef? And in thy depths at peace,
What sundered Argosies?

III

Unrivall'd! Unconfinéd! Uncontroll'd!
Where are the schooners, barks, and brigantines
By potent storms, abused? What purple wines
Of juicy grape, in sinking Norman hold
Have dyed thy flow? Embarking for this shore
How many bold explorers braved thy might
From isles Castilian; lands of pagan night?
Thou canst not give reply for evermore,
So solitary, I but weakly say
Great Neptune, list my lay!

IV

Presumptuous vassal I full well do know
Of hurricanes, of typhoons, thunderous

When went the great Armada, perilous
To doom: For mediæval legends blow
Their golden clarions! When, too, amain
The Mayflow'r weathered the wroth waxing gale,
Fostering sage Discov'ry:—When in mail
The Rovers did infest the Spanish main:
Of such thy archives speak. To whom, O Sea
Yieldst thou supremacy?

V

To One alone? each billow rolls reply?
'Twere well indeed, that just so it should be:
Astounding miracle, no doubt, *we* see
With *human* orb, shall woo the *Spirit*-eye.
Thus are all things in our philosophy
Most marvellous. Great ocean in thy will
Occult to man, hast thou not monsters still?
Or caverns dark with living mystery?
Or lethal uplands grim with sorcery
Left for Futurity?

VI

To Contemplation, whosoever makes
A sweet recourse, shall see most sovran sights,
Among which, Ocean, thou dost know the rites
Of heritage. No wizard ever takes
A surer hold than Fancy: O'er the waves
The Sea Gull wings, and near the jutty crag
The Cormorant seeks rest. Hard on a snag
A vessel founders. Wild the brine-foam laves
The Light-house strand! Neptune, I vaguely see
Thy awful empery!

TO A BUTTERFLY

Angelic spirit of the air,
  Wingéd of softest elegance,
Dress the fairest of the fair,
  Wisely wouldst thou lead me hence?
Were I but a Butterfly
Fluttering as thou on high,
  To a zone of famed Delight
I'd fly, I'd fly, I'd fly
  With unencumbered might.

Nor think of things that fleeted were
  For such oft bear a secret pain,
But o'er the Honeysuckle stir
  And sip the luscious nectar, fain
Would I: And on the Eglantine
In rosy June I'd banquet fine
  And think:—but dost thou think, small elf
While quaffing dewy wine,
  Ever, ever of thyself?

Art thou unconscious of the curl
  Of Loveliness? or Vanity?
If so, ye differ from the girl
  Whom Beauty pays her limpid fee,
For she grown flippant, haughty, vain,
Will pose the merest doll to gain
  Our admiration: Ah forbid
Should lurk thy wings one stain
  The pardlike fawn amid!

On the Clover-head ye light
  Like the presence of a gnome
Seen of soul, unseen of sight:
  Ethereal being, where's thy home?

Abidest thou in the demesne
Wherein Titania is the queen?
  Pretty creature, breathe ye well
If indeed it is the green
  Domicile of Beautiful?

Soft, O soft as Zephyrs float,
  Or Moonbeams filter dark ozone,
Or Sunsets linger, thou remote
  Dost bend thy pinions. Goest lone
To where all flowers sweetly wear
The blush of Goddess Flora? Where
  A sunny everlasting band
Make merry mirth? O may I dare
  To seek that much sought land?

Off with thee, my gaze grows dim;
  Thy fairy form I watch until
Away, away, all visions swim—
  Beyond the distance blues the hill;
I hear a brook, I faintly see
A hazy prospect: Ecstacy
  Intoxicates! Where hast thou flown?
Thou leavest me, unhappily
  Alone, alone, alone.

TO WINTER

Thou Storm King o' the mailéd crystal sheen
  Whose icy breath doth kill the latest flowers;
Thou son of Devastation often seen
  Gloating in triumph o'er Autumn's dying hours;
Thou conqueror of Fall, and of her showers,
  Hast thou returned?—Shakspere's aid I urge,
Beethoven's, or be mine the Rembrandt brush,

So, Winter, might I dare
While trees of leaves be bare
Inspirédly! to poetize, or flush
In paint, or harmonize, a tuneful dirge.

A dirge? Wherefore the dirge? If he be true
The Artist, whatsoe'er his landskip bold,
Pays thee his whitest tribute. Canst thou view
Wingheeléd Mercuries, despite of cold,
Swarming thy rinks, without a thrill of old?
Or, diamonded the trees nod dozily?
Aeolus walk his rounds, a ghost confessed?
Waxwing with thee, and Jay,
And Goldfinch thine alway?
The glorious Sun-god bloom the soundless West
And halo thy horizon rosily?

Who has not heard, or cannot oft discern
While nestling prone beside the cozy grate
Thy spirit as the glowing embers burn?
Or dwelling, when the frosty hour is late,
In Meditation's realm feels not, with Fate,
A Winter'd hist'ry?—Norsemen as of old,
The hardy Viking o'er the stormswept sea;
The Merry Saint of Noel;
Explorers and arctic Pole;
And peopled chapters, breathing mystery
Reanimate his brain, and brave the cold?

Sometimes while treading the snowcappéd wood
A weary traveler encounters thee;
Thy white locks shiver'd o'er, and hoary hood;
Thy mantle flapping to the wind, which free,
Doth play a hectic music: Blustery
Girt with thy flacons, he beholds thee still
Thronéd of ice, shaking a sceptry hand—

Where Snowflakes, Chickadee,
Nuthatch, and Crossbills be:
Surveying with hauteur thy frostchilléd land
Thou reignest monarch with a mighty will!

ABSTRACT GRANDEUR

I

Deity Peerless! lend my spirit flight:
I grope bewilder'd in a strange domain
Of dusk intense, yet softly see the light
Maia hath seen: permit that my soul gain
Those heights by Daylight dimmed, unknown of Night,
Where Elfins dance, high on a cloudy plain;
Those vales lethean, where is ever known
The Rose sky-blown.

II

Say I among your Myrtles free of care
May silent pause on the Autumnal sun;
Say I may watch the fantasies of Air;
May bask in Twilight, when the day is done:—
Ye shades of abstract Grandeur everywhere
Attest my fervor when in spirit gone,
Shall sink my form exhausted, as it were,
In th' sepulchre!

III

Impossible to gainsay is thy song.
Who would find flaws in heavenly diamond glows?
Or in the flow'r a petal set in wrong!
Or liken 'passioned poetry to prose?

There be such men, and to their race belong
Not Art's apostles: Foreign these to those,
Who cavil with untiring venom'd breath
Till cold in death!

IV

I seem to stand upon the quiescent breeze;
A world of green salutes the steadfast gaze:
Far to the East, a grove of stately trees:
And to the North, a windmill turns in haze:
The West commends a waste of broken leas:
A rill, from South, on mossy pebbles plays;
Ah, what, by Glory, were most justly famed
Than Earth untamed?

V

Ye all who ever inspiration gave
To pen of poet, listen drowsily
When troubled beings shall have found the grave:
Sing, sing, sweet-sadly, singest lustily
To Dryads, Faun: yea to some simple slave
Of Verse whose flaming brain sought hungerly
To give to language a seductive tune:
Grant thou this boon!

SUMMER'S FAREWELL

A Pindaric Ode

O Dorian theme! Attuned Aeolian Lyre!
Be mine your glory born of ages long!
O Homer, Milton, Chaucer, pray inspire,
And velvet-throated Keats, unite thy song!
Arise thou Muse of Delphi's golden fire
And glisten pinions; thrill myself entire;
Permit no vagrant fancy flee
Away from me,
But O
Attend desires, while August's breezes blow!

August? Ah see, she tarries in the gold
Of sylvan temples! Summer is asleep,
And Autumn's vanguard lingers in the fold
Of orient meadows, lavish harvests deep
In zones suburban; now the distant mold
Of Phœbus, strokes the plains with rosy gold;
Purples the maze-dim margin'd hills;
Silvers the rills!
Ah who
Would not seek Beauty in her rendezvous?

Go, quit the sordid world and visit her,
E'en tho' for a brief period it be.
'Neath the blue clouds of Heaven O bestir
Thyself with ease and lightness, buoyancy;
Go walk with August, in the happy lair
Where Asters, and belled meadow Lilies snare
The heart, and crimson Poppies glow
And Golden Rods debut,
Proudly
To wonted greenness, thither, thither flee.

Felicity, O canker not, nor cloy
With fervid frenzy! O I hear thy wings
Melodious Muse! O happy Muse, my joy
Like unto gurgling Heliconian Springs
Gushes with soulfulness! Parnassus, high,
I see your tenants Nine! O let me fly
To thee; and mingle with the bards—
A poet; naught retards
This thought
Nor swooning soul, nor forehead flushed and hot!

August, I'll sing to thee another time;
This first diversion wilt thou brook? I'll sing
When youthfulness hath fled my latest rhyme.
Sweetly with thee, the swallows are awing;
The Redbreast carols: Sweet, O joyous time
Hast thou no music? Aye thy sunny clime
Hears hidden anthems, all thine own,
In viewless voices blown
Full soft
From boughs remote, and idly echoing croft!

August, alone with thee: am I ALONE?
O langorous vision of a peaceful dream
Who loves not Beauty, he had best atone
To thee. The Pine-tree plaineth to the stream,
And in the flow'r embroider'd wood is shown
Wild Clematis, of cloddish souls unknown
The light wind rustles weeds among,
In ecstacies unsung;
Now hath
The drowsing spirit found its aftermath!

TO FLORA, GODDESS OF FLOWERS

Flora! young goddess! Shade Aerial!
  Than whom no personage is lovelier
In all the fabled Grecian progeny,
  Nor Daphne, Io, Ops, excepted are—
Most exquisite, most fair, most beautiful,
Observe how not ungallantly I kneel
            To Thee:
Before thy shrine, or altar reared of flowers,
To verse a victim, and to all thy powers
            A devotee:
Indeed, thou lovely, lovely star of posies
May I salute thy roses?

May I salute thy lilies? May I dare?
  May I salute them? Yet, at least to me
Not so sweet is your queen, June's fiancee,
  Not so sweet is your cloister's votary—
The lily—as those wilding flowers rare:
Spring's violet, summer's harebell, autumn's heir—
            The poppy—
No! for wilt thou, O Flora, not prefer
Our simple flowers of nature; those that stir
            One's soul as sweetly
As doth the bee, who, in sun-showers, chuckles
Sipping lush honeysuckles?

Attican Saint: O spirit of sunrise—
  And of sundown—eternal fantasy!
While clouds Aprilian, blue and sunny-beamed,
  Bloomed the mounds and tricklings meadowy;
Ay, and from out a dove-cote, Drowsy Eyes
Brooded aloft to Flora's floral skies
            It seemed
To me a voice thus spake: "What's poetry?

The scent from thought's full flow'r," and was it she
(Or had I dreamed?)
From whom a flower fell? O Star of Posies,
I shall salute thy roses!

TO PHILOMELA

(*To whom I listened last night in a glorious dream, and who, I thought, upon my approach, winged away.*)

"Most musical, most melancholy bird."
—Milton.

I

By virtue of my never having seen,
Or heard thy presence deep in underwood,
A hesitant hath been my mood:
Yet foreignly in leafy solitude
Thou singest sweet a song of sad serene
For other folk whose hearts were fain to melt,
Or fainer still, perchance, to float away
With thee to regions far beyond our day
Or night:—
Assuredly to Paradicean height
Unfamed, unfound, unfelt!

II

Sad bird, and do I listen now thy song?
Thy song replete with mournful minstrelsy?
In truth, methinks it well might be
As some sweet Siren known of only thee
Had sobbed her gentle self the Sky along,
And sighed asleep amidst most fragrant flowers,
Her pillow but a Star, her gown Eve's shroud,

Her couch the Moon, her curtains naught save
Cloud:—
Ah! when
Soft sleep had made a comma, was it then
Exertest thou thy powers?

III

I venture to assert 'twere even thus,
But be this as it may, I follow thee
Wherever I am bade, Birdie—
Far in the forest to that selfsame tree
Whence issues such a strain circumfluous
The very air seems now to undulate;
Delicious eloquence great glooms rehearse;
Nocturnal shadows sweep our universe:
'Tis meet
Abroad I hearken to my heart's each beat
While pulsing echoes wait.

IV

Sad, sweetly sad of singers, Philomel,
Or Nightingale which name may suit thee best,
Deeply of Dusking guessed
I find thy haunt; above with beauty dressed
Thick leafiness would fresco Heaven well:
Brain-gone in Delphic glory have I trod
Through plashy meads and freshest flowers sweet
To pause beside thy sylvan low retreat:
Vain lot!
Who comes too close avails himself of what
I ask myself aloud?

TO AMERICA

"O Union strong and great!"
Longfellow.

I

When soul of son and sire with transport welled
A distant date beholding welcome soil
Amidst the waste of waters, nor rebelled
But docile grew the mutineers whose toil,
Had thus attainéd the supreme result;
When these rude men, knave, ruffian and dolt
Looséd from dungeons dire by Isabelle,
Found with the good Columbus golden ground
By savage trod, by tent and wigwam crowned
What pen may tell
The joy, the exultation?—the profound
Significance which History's page befell?

II

Columbia, with Phœnix-wings arose
Unto a nation's stature. Let a king,
That moth of Fame, be named among her foes
She fears no dissolution. Freemen sing
The praise of him whose patriotic aid
Coupled with that of France substantial made
Tri-colored liberty. Rebellious rolls
A tide, henceforth, to rend the State; surely
Such strife were vain: Celestial Liberty
Born of red gules:
Whose face is fair; whose heart is gray;
Protect my native land: her rights: her rules!

III

America, what lovelier land than thine?
From Northern bounds, known of the midnight-sun
To Southern scenes where luscious fruits design
A California field or Floridan;
From the Atlantic to Pacific strand
What towns, what streams, what farms on either hand?—
Moreover haloed by the azure veil
Of her whose statue, pray God, shall for aye
On Bedloe Isle a flaming torch display
While Braves prevail;
While tyrants groan; while traitors wince full wry;
And while the Eagles perch our standards hale!

TO A REDBREAST

I

Thou usher of the vernal season, hear!
Thou whose voice shrilly greets this lovely Morn
Which as a Rose hath oped of crimson cheer
To in sheer fullness rest maturedly born;
What with thine easy treble caroling
And that of the wild choralists ye lead
On yonder Maple, singing songs for Spring
Boasting the warmth, the fervor incident
To Beauty where in seed she dormant lies:
Thou sylvan Oread, what with spring's consent
(Who, through my window, casts her sunny eyes)
And every soothing sound my ear must need
Give audience: small wonder if quite dumb

Of thee I ask
Most pleasant task;
An omen this of gentle days to come?

II

Where are thy haunts? The boughs have new leaves not;
Early her premier for the Year it is
To don of gowns perennial: yet sweet lot
Is mine to wander thither where wings this
Red-bosomed herald, be the season what
It might provided winter 'cepted be:
Abroad! Abroad! ere Nature shall allot
With wilding flow'rs the wood, have hurried ye,
The better to exult when is become
Soft green the hills, and mossed the rill's cool edge;
When balmy breezes waft the Bumble's hum
From some fresh meadow, or lone marshy hedge,
Or across clover lanes full odorous;
And choke-cherries
Are on the trees;
What are ye, all the while, but—glorious?

III

Such be thy mood dear Optimist, alway,
Even as Autumn come, yet be thou so:
Why otherwise of spirit? who will say?
Awing with thee no bounds my fancies know:
Away, nor linger; whither? hastening
While tenderly live gales do sleep; or gush
Through vines whose grapes in ripest clusters cling;
To sandbars river-ward, and underbrush;
Thence to the trees; and now when fades the day

Like to a Red Rose, pigeon crofts remote
Answer the garden-sparrows; blissfully
House wrens, and martins, with the lowing cote,
Swell the full choir; and Robin's vocal strain
Time and again
Startles me, when
A dreamy drowsiness embalms the brain!

ON A FADING WILD ROSE

Ah could this speak
What might its rose-mouth tell?
This rural Hummer's Love, whose sweets to seek
Maidens red-lippéd, svelt and young and gay
May of a Summer day
Be seen traversing woodlands prodigal.

I know not whence
Thou comest, Flow'r, nor why;
Nor wherefore thy heart's breath, this sweet incense
Converts the air: My ignorance forgive,
I only know I live
And wakeful watch Life's anguish ere I die!

Oh latter word
How magical thou art!
Oft would I leave, of Humankind unheard,
Oblivious of all save One whose ear
Hears fall the unseen tear—
(And mutely fade as thou, and so depart)

This hapless realm
Of Pain, of Care, of Teen,
Where gaunt Grief seeks the while to overwhelm
The heart! Where Joys amid dull Sorrows grope
Were there no better hope:
But ah, away sick thoughts; why intervene?

A fading Rose!
How irreparable
Its petals fall! Where now Apollo's pose
Of gold? Where now the blushful smiles that were
Wont to soft eyes ensnare?
What earthly Grandeur is imperishable?

Sweet flow'r how oft
Thy kindred symbol's Love;
A lord his fiancee hath breathéd soft:
"Dearest, these roses do our nuptials bless,"
While in Love's loneliness
Another sees a Rose wilt, shorn thereof!

Perhaps of thine
Kings decked their palaces
Full lovely as the fabled Delphic shrine
In erewhile ages, when the Oracle
Was much besought: withal
As grand as Grecian glory in surmise.

The poet deems
Thyself his mace superne;
Why not? when thro' those verdurous day-dreams
Of visions indescribable his brain
With ecstacy will gain
Glimpses of thee at every happy turn?

The Queen of blooms
Art thou in Beauty's bower;
Nor light this lovely title, when uplooms
In mental haunts the Pink, and Posies pied:
The Violet—Spring's pride,
And dark-cheeked Pansies, vying all for power.

Incredible
Is sadness, when it swims
Unsought into the channels of our will—
As bleeding beauty! Like a man in throes
Even the withered Rose
Outbreathes its spirit as the color dims!

Quite limp and dead
My fingers gently hold
A red Wild Rose: O whither, whither fled
The odorous breath? Perhaps erelong
Beauty with darkling tongue
May ask: Where is the child I kissed of old?

Thy breath is gone
Wherewith life is sustained;
No more, alas, these futile features wan
Shall show their beauty to the dews of Morn!
Nor more wilt thou adorn
Fair Flora's fane: with Twilight thou hast waned!

TO A PROUD BELLE

Ere yet proud Beauty, thou wert made
Recipient of gifts which fade
Perhaps an ugly child
Wert thou. Perhaps Milady Vain
The Destinies were best not deign
To humor one—beguiled.

O wherefore raise so haughtily
The while you heave a languorous sigh
Those dark and lustrous eyes
That softer be and lovelier
Than Butterfly's most downy fur
Unseen save of surmise?

Why ape cold Winter's frozen heart
Whilst thine, devoid of his fine art
  Perforce can never melt?
Retrace, who can, the steps of Pride
Or Vanity, when at Truth's side
  Time's wizened leers are felt?

Divest thyself of sallow Pride;
Permit thy beauty's texture bide
  Untrammell'd, free, unseared;
Nor let false-masked Presumption haunt,
Nor jeopardize, by idle flaunt,
  Thy comely self endeared.

TO SOMBRE BEAUTY

"Mourning in thy robe of pride,
Desolation deified."

—Shelley.

I

Which is more beautiful; the silver Morn
  Holding aloft her dewy cup of gold,
Ablution proffering to buds new-born—
  The while a million opals glister cold
On ferns, on grasses, and on flowers, sworn
  True courtiers to Beauty? or sad Night
Aloof in ebon splendour, so forlorn,
  So desolate, that Moon and Stars delight
In daylight memories rather than adorn
  Her courts and galleries; canst thou infer
    Which is the lovelier?

II

Depends it on the individual;
  There be some folks who relish empty bliss;
More to whose spirits Melody would pall;
  Others who shudder at the youthful kiss;
Some few exist, whose voices Oracle
  Would have in verse all Pleasure, sans the Pain,
Which same, half-bodied, do not see withal
  That wedded are the children, Bliss and Bane,
Yet unto Selfishness, do these give all
  And mock the chronicler who dares devote
    A space such to denote.

III

Go you, whatever be your temperament
  Into the bow'r of Beauty. Pluck the Rose
And watch it wilt, while merry is your bent;
  Or feast upon the sweet unconscious pose
Of giggling girlhood; or in joyance vent
  Your spite full on a Rainbow's gorgeous hues;
Or, none appealing, under Even's tent
  Adore the grace divine when stars suffuse
A river black with cold aggrandizement:
  Of sombre Beauty *all;* of Light and Love
    The Loveliness thereof.

TO HOPE

I

A gentler word than gentle, ah by far,
  A softer word than soft I would employ;
A sweeter word than sweet, dearer than dear,
  Were best to welcome thee, my pride and joy—
Thee lovely seraph, thee of lucent eyes,
Bright vestal virgin, sister from the skies,
  Frail, but yet how stout,
  Born of Despair and Doubt!

II

Out of the cavern of intensest gloom
  Thy beauteous presence hath regaled my sense;
Sweet as the Rose's undefiled perfume,
  Art thou, or Tyrian shades of early Morn,
Fair as a blissful moment languorous,
Quiet as turtles snug in muddy moss,
  Or doves on gabled eaves,
  Or silk-worms munching leaves.

III

Oblivious grow we to all save zest;
  Naught but the halo of pervading light
Round the high summits of a bleak unrest
  Hovers like Fairies on a Moonlit night,
Whose little wings the glowing gloom enhance,
Whose starry feet upon the heavens dance:—
  To prove our souls unwon
  It were, I fear, ill done.

IV

Pegasus, think not I enow am vain
To seek to trespass Phœbus' hierarchy;
His sacred temple blushless to profane;—
To scorn Euterpe or Terpsichore:
No; by the pleasure Momus did invent,
I swear my verse at least is reverent
And tho' it weak may grope
Leans on thy anchor, Hope!

V

Lonely a time with Mid-eve anguishing
Conscious I grew of other company
I gazed around the silence lingering,
No voice, no word, no marvel haunted me
But two warm eyes were peering from the deep
Invulnerable dark where Hope doth sleep:
I straight made scrutiny
And surely it was she!

VI

She, Hope! this soothing, most bewitching Fairy,
This comforter to all humanity,
Her purest glance was one of gladness very,
From her tiara drooped a Peony,
A brave Rose fell, merry of withering,
A violet betokened vernal Spring;
Of Grief she was half-won
But Heartache knew she none.

AFTER RE-READING ROSTAND'S CYRANO DE BERGERAC

Seldom a golden book I lay aside
  Without a darling spright forevermore
  About my brain breathes legendary lore
And love for them that be Apollo's pride;
Many a day, or good or ill betide,
  This sometime soul-Elysian, known of yore
  As Psyche and whom Grecia's Gods adore,
Hath sought her wings superne: alas and sighed:
Like Bergerac, the boldest of the bold,
  She sighs; like him, who, true to the Rostand strain,
High on the Gascon ramparts, sighed of old,
  Strong as the rock Gibraltar: With might and main
Braved he the Storm, nor caught his death of cold:
  Alone with God prone on the Arras plain.

'Tis the scentless perfume of the Flower of Thought:
The Poppies rare that glow in sunset skies—
The Bluebells fair that grow in girlish eyes—
And pink Carnations, as if fairy wrought,
Tinting some dimpled cheeks—all these are fraught
With that soul-essence—Poetry; it lies
Dormant in dusk—a nightshade; dawn—sunrise;
In meltful music, grand sweets, it hath brought.
If Poetry possess such subtle power
In eyes, in cheeks—yea! and in loving voices,
In Morphean sleep, in Arcadean bower,
What man is that whose spirit nor rejoices
Nor takes in Faydom blissful, elfin choices?
For him the scent is lost from Thought's full-flower.

AH! DEAREST LOVE, DID I LAY COLD IN DEATH

Ah! Dearest Love, did I lay cold in death
The flow'rs about my casket grave and grim
Say, would you—could you—drop a tear for him
Who loved you with his latest every breath?
There is a dawn tho' daylight withereth.
There is a sleep unguessed of by the dim,
Shadowy speculation: there's a trim —
Yes,—and a sable beauty—deathless Death.
Ah! would you, darling! drop a heartfelt tear
If, thro' the fresh and wreathy garlands lain
Lovingly on my silent, bodeful bier
There came the thought of days nor Joy nor Pain
Nor Pity could restore? That all held dear
Might this hand, nerveless, never greet again!

FORT SNELLING

This site speaks volumes to the historied!
Of late when I upon its bridge was come
That thought possessed me, as a soldier glum
And battle-scarred I passed, unlaurelléd.
The scenery seemed asleep as tho' a dream
Of mingled glory and fierce savagery
Haunted the fort, the ground, the every tree;
Even the clouds looked somberly agleam.
Distinctly then I heard a bugle blare
A martial medley of the long ago;
Of ensigns ta'en in war—of bloody woe—
Heart-break and fray—and above all an air
Of rose-wreathes wilting on a hero's heart:
Alas, when grandeur is of gloom a part!

OUT BEYOND CONCORDIA COLLEGE, ST. PAUL

Many the wild birds I this day have heard
Beyond Concordia's campus and her green
And many a living color have I seen
Ere sang the Thrush, brown hermit, undeterred:
The Catbird everything hath done but purred,
The Pewee, constant to her sorrows keen
Complains;—of suns that bloom the blue serene
The Oriole tells; and Wrens the leaves have stirred:
Sweet is the music of earth's poetry.
Listen, ye worldlings, to the meadowlark
And to the Grosbeak whistling merrily
And to the gold-finch in the wildwood-park:
Hear ye the burthen of the mystery?—
Listen a pretty day from dawn till dark.

TO A WOOD THRUSH

Scarce breathing have I walked the woodland wild
This sacred Sabbath-day since Vesper-bell,
And now, as daylight darkles, thou dost well
To flute for him who loves thee—Dryad-child:
Here from the wide world happily exiled
Soothéd I hear him to the wood-nymphs tell
His pearliest beads of Nature, and of hell
No word—but Heaven to Heaven is reconciled:
O Wood-Thrush, bard of all the answering Thrushes
Is thine an echo from the Hebrides?
The Cranesbill—Robin's Plantain—and the rushes
Through which I trod—the God—and every breeze
That, with the sun, robs scent from wild-rose bushes
Deliciously must hear thee in the trees!

IN A NEIGHBOR'S GARDEN

Sweet Peas all wingéd like departing souls;
Pansies that flirt with Phœbus in the shade,—
Blonde and brunette; and as of earth afraid
Nasturtiums ever seeking higher goals;
Forget-me-nots, whose very name condoles
Our stern bereavements; Mignonette as staid
As scented nun, and roses for your maid;
These I do love, and these my love extols;
But more I love the darling wilding flower,
The Crocus, sweet misnomer, skyey-hued,
And every spirit of the warm sun-shower
All teary-eyed this heart of mine hath viewed;
The Violet, the Cowslip,—Virgin's Bower,
The Primrose of the wayside solitude.

AT MINNEHAHA FALLS, MINNEAPOLIS

Hearken! thou wild and watery magnitude!
  Thou, in whose presence Nature half-forlorn,
  Half-listless, listens unto Triton's horn
Wound from that god's verisimilitude;
Hearken! thou aper of old Ocean's mood—
  Thou parkéd Arethusa!—many a morn
  And many a moon, contemplative, footworn,
Have I not shared thy woodland solitude?
Hearken! There's thunder where no lightnings break—
  A rainbow where 'tis cloudless: such is Beauty—
Indeed her very texture. For her sake
  Who goes abroad (and this is mortal duty)
At such a time, his cognizance shall take
  Of Neptune's foamy phantom fresh from the sea!

CANDLEMAS

That beast prophetic of this many a year,
  The Groundhog, sees his shadow and departs
  For thrice a fortnight ere my Queen of Hearts
All pied with mickle Violets is near;
Flow'r-breath'd, bird-voiced, star-eyed, the beauteous dear
  Pearls the green April moon; such be her arts
  That her I'll love till struck by Pluto's darts
Sinks my cold clay into Death's cavern drear:
Times strange, O Candlemas, with friend and foe
  Have wrought alike—(sweetheart and lovesick thrall,
Living and lost)—since first on Winter's snow
  Thy spirit sought his shadow, yet, for all,
Other than thine no Mary shalt thou know
  Whose purification makes a festival.

AT THE INDIAN MOUNDS, ST. PAUL

Nature is here a sculptor:—wise—discreet—
Her plastic art seems much in evidence;
A breathing spot these Indian mounds immense
Where one may give one's eyes a very treat.
Let those oppresséd or with brain awhirl
Here bend their footsteps of a day and greet
This sculptor god: appeaséd shall they be.
Whose handiwork?—ye ask;—what mystery!
A pre-historic ghost with gnomy feet
Stalks here about; and where is hewn from pearl
Huge clouds: from gold and floral ivory
The skyey wainscot: from stars the river clear:
The *boding Presence* looks as though to say:
Pygmalion a rival hast thou here!

ON A TRAIN EXCURSION TO FOREST LAKE

Poppies as martial as the Red Cockade;
Larkspur, to whom no Lark at Heaven's height
Sings; Dog-fennel daisies, that by night
Do droop their languid ears; in sun and shade
Bluebells warm winds have rung; from angry spade
Cockles in hiding; Marguerites more white
Than unseen day stars; such as these delight
Not every man who whirls the rumbling grade:
But I, Great God, a child that manhood mars
Have but to gaze to be ecstatified;
To think of wildflowers even by the cars
Disclosed, fills me with as glorious pride
As when, in Forest Lake, I once descried,
Exalt, two lovers' souls against the stars.

WRITTEN ON TOP OF CHUCKANUT

I stood with Silence one amid the stars;
  Happy the eve and Vesper, wide-awake—
  Bright darling—for eternally she'd shake
Her little silvery wings across the bars
Of Ocean's stilly sunset warmly golden—
  Lord!—as beyond the heavens she would fly
  To fathom th' mystery: I swear that I
By Heaven! to dearer scene was ne'er beholden;
The orient clouds pre-sentinelling the sun—
  The trumpet honey-bloom fain to bequeathe
Her sweets to the zealous bee; fagged out with fun
  A butterfly listening to Silence breathe:
These, these for the nonce indulged me; these would
      wreathe
  My spirit wings, so might we both be one!

INDEPENDENCE DAY

Great is our country, great her valorous sires,
  Who formerly on many a sturdy field
  Admonished the haughty Briton; made him yield
Who crowned would quench the patriotic fires—
Yet Freedom lives eternal, godlike child!
  Asleep betimes she ever will awaken
  And from her fiery Phœnix-wings is shaken

Thenceforth of bloody tears an anthem wild:—
  All hail America, my native land!
  Never I heard thy diviner spirit sigh
At Valley Forge—at Concord—at dismanned
Old Sumpter—No, or on the Fourth o' July
  Without, by Heaven's stars, on every hand
  All-glorious Liberty, I felt thee nigh!

AT BELLINGHAM BEACH

Neptunus stirs about this soundless shore
  Unceasingly, and of the briny deep
  He speaks, and of the salt-sea dogs asleep
Distant not many leagues that oft do roar;
His is a yarn heard now and heretofore
  By stars, that fallen from sometime skyey seas
  Hold to these rocks, inconstant Pleiades—
Boon-friends of shells and other wonders more:
Hark ye! who ever love the billowy main!
  And ye who gasp at such immensity
Spell-bound! At low tide come ye, drowsed of brain,
  When fishers fly and gulls, and silently
The songsters rest—then see ye Triton's reign,
  And hear of Silence her lost minstrelsy!

I KNOW A HILL

I know a hill whereon—felicity!—
  Strawberries grow, and where wild blackberries
  Hide amongst stumps as tho' pursued by fairies
Perverse, whose tinkling pails sound humanly.
With what exultant joy the honey bee
  Stirs hereabouts and on the foxglove tarries
  A lushy while, or how earth's spirit marries
Sweet heaven's own, to tell 'tis far from me.
O what a glory hath this earth of ours
  For him who fares lighthearted o'er the hills.
Daisies and lillies, hold him,—Indian-flowers
  And Columbines; for him each blossom thrills
With silent love, and he so feels these powers
  That soon the poet's light his utter being fills!

LIFE'S TIDE HATH BEEN AT EBB FULL MANY A YEAR

Life's tide hath been at ebb full many a year—
  A score and four—since first these eyes of mine
  Gazéd on Nature and her heart divine
With scarce a feeling other than a tear.
Two dozen Aprils have rained sweet Mayflowers;
  Two dozen Junes have lain on darling roses
  Like Angel's tears; millions of Autumn posies
Have filled the clouds even in wintry hours;
Ay—and since Nature is at one with life
  And I a part of Jove's eternal dreaming
Why, Heavens! I'll haste me like that hummer rife
  With love of flowers that scarletly are gleaming;
I'll haste, like him, afar from human strife:
  Like him I'll die and learn that life is *seeming*.

IN THE CASCADES; TRIPLE-PEAKED INDEX

Awed at thyself thou stand'st majestical!
  Serenity and stars abide thy zone,
  LIFE, DEATH, OBLIVION: thou art alone
Beneath Jove's heavenly blue ethereal,
The soul of three sublimities. Where fall
  Huge avalanches, and whither tree-nymphs moan
  Because Medusa changéd thee to stone,
There sittest thou, a Titan yet in thrall:
Ye sagebrush wilds, ye minarets, ye towers,
  Ye mountainous haunts where beasts ferocious be—
Hard fastnesses—ye blue and red-souled flowers,
  And thou O Earth! when we no longer see
Still shalt thou live, a heritage—great powers—
  To Man, an emblem of Eternity!

IN THE ROCKIES; LAKE MAC DONALD

Where Silence sat listening to the Moon
  Aweary of Pan, and where the Trinity
  Bid Avalanche Basin see divinity
There did I wish me late—thrice beauteous boon!
Eve's lonesome child, singing a soundless tune,
  Venus, gave Heaven her virginity
  Whereat MacDonald's green vicinity
Showed watery peaks their snowy heads in June:
Henceforth the Rocky Mountains to appall
  Meseems is thy wet function; and when years
Like ghosts haunt Belton woods, and flowers recall
  Empyreal flakes, MacDonald! it appears
As if for Man's transgressions, great and small,
  Our heavenly Father drops celestial tears.

THE CANADIAN ROCKIES AND SELKIRKS

The cloudy peaks, the roaring wild cascades,
  The dizzy glaciers, and the still ravines,
  The canyons; cirques; the gorges;—Alpine scenes
Rock-bound, that gaze at Winter; piney glades
Of perilous seeming; chasms in whose shades
  Swoop vapory Eagles; cataracts,—glens,—greens
  Fir-topped, and foot-hills stealing Skyey sheens:
What power, O Nature, all these powers pervades?
Thou answerest not, and yet thy voice is loud!
  Ye rainbows round the celestial mountain-storm,
Ye clouds that make for Earth's hot sun a shroud,
  Ye lightnings the thundery Heavens bid perform,
  Ye fair frost flowers o'er whom the wild bees swarm,
To ye speaks Silence, Silence the God avowed!

ON LOVE

As one who on the Moon too long has gazed
Sees gossamer glooms encircling burning beams,
My sight deceptive has my brain amazed,
Discerning faces in the gilded gleams
Of various design: a lovely Queen
Mature in grace from Beauty's pure demesne,
With hair like Dusk, complexion like the Morn,
Abides in this, my heart of applique,
Sweeter than Ruth amid the orient corn,
Fairer than Flora on her festal day,
She smiles upon my thrills, as on a Morn
I trembled, flushing faint with Love's high bliss
Enraptured at the chimera of a kiss,—
Before the birth of that fell Titan, Scorn!

SUMMER OF AUTUMN

Fair is the feel of Summer—fadeless too!
  Tho' the hard storm her early life enshrouds
  Yet beauteous flowers fill stern thunderclouds,
And perilous lightnings purify anew
That air which Flora breathes as humans do,
  Breathes, where upon her wild and pretty posies
  Fatigued she rests, and hears the while she dozes
A Hopper winging to her hills of blue:

Of thee, he prophecies, thou sweet first born
  Of thee, like Dandelion, come to earth
Immaculate. Oh, many's the eve forlorn
  After the Cricket in his woody berth
Had sung the birds asleep—that, tho' forsworn,
  I yet have breathed a prayer, and heard of Song
    no dearth.

A THANKSGIVING PRAYER

Lord God of Hosts, be with us once again
Lest we forget the import of this day:
Let not a personal Ego hold at bay
Such prayers as bowed the landed Mayflower-men;
Let not hard Greed hot from his wolfish den
Plunder our poor, nor yet let Bigots slay
Defenceless Humankind; this, Lord, we pray
On bended knees we folk American:
Thankful this day are we for festive hours;
Thankful are we that Patriots swell our ken;
Thankful, moreover, that among the Pow'rs
We stand who flourish neither sword nor pen;
But thankful most are we, Lord God, that ours
Is of the common Heritage. Amen.

CHRISTMAS

White Blashfield angels ringing Christmas bells;
The Christ from out this starriest of morns
Risen triumphant high above our thorns,
Blue-eyed, of human savors, heavenly spells;
A bearded stranger down his moony dells
Urging familiar reindeer; drums and horns
Proclaiming Man's rebirth:—all this adorns
That sense, Friends mine, wherein our Heaven dwells!
Ring Blashfield bells, and sing thou Angels dumb!
If I mistake not, yonder frosty moon
Bears in her beams the spirit o' Kingdom-Come
Who stays for music—a celestial tune,
Nor know I if he be God's son—kind boon—
Or Nicholas, dearest saint of Fairydom!

NEW YEAR'S

Youth's Jack o' Lantern through my window looks
  And almost I could think it Hallowe'en,
  Except that out of doors no grass is green,
Nor lurking mischievous our prankish spooks;
Low is my hearthstone and my spirit brooks
  No fellowship save that which stirs unseen;
  And when of sleighbells and night's starred serene
The frozen silence sings, I shut my books;
A happy New Year thou who back art bringing
  Our Family Circle; while thou ringest on
I yet hear sister voices round me singing
  Such carols as illume white eves agone,
And friends I hear, and thou above me winging
  O Mother Mine whose Day is still my Dawn!

ON THE MARCH WINDS

They voice Apollo's sweetest sentiments
  Who, reinforcéd thus sucks dry the pool
  Resultant from a thawing ice-mesh cool
And snowy moisture; then they hasten hence
So mirthfully, we of their mood partake,
  Over the meadow, hill and melting brook;
  So very gentle that, except we look,
Never ourselves might to their mission wake;
So very tender that indeed until
  Our eyes, half-languid on a day behold
Spring wide-awake upon a Marigold
We almost doubt; yet hark, the whippoorwill,
  To sing her even song she doth empower—
  As balmy as the breathing of a flower.

CHRISTMAS EVE

The saints are stirring; it is Christmas eve!
  Listen! Ye household gods, can ye not hear
  Above the frosty sleighbells ever dear
A starry anthem? and, by heaven's leave,
Old granny's voice? That ye may well deceive
  Suspicious youth she'll aid you, never fear,
  In your conspiracy! It doth appear
She tells of Santa! Ay, and all believe!
  A Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year
  Ye grey haired boys and girls and ye who mingle
With jocund musings ever tenderer:
  O like that child who hears, with veins a-tingle,
Boreas' chant of reindeer from afar,
  So do I feel, and all the world's a-jingle!

WINTER AND POETRY

Even Winter hath his poetry—the snow.
  For crystals are, as fair as is the thought
  That freights a day-dream when a chimney drought,
All frozenly, doth hark to Aquilo;
While blue-eyed cinders, winking and aglow
  Spirit one whither wonders have been wrought
  Ho! what's diviner than to live unsought,
Tales legendary, extant and ago?
  Surely is snow not Winter's poetry?
Indeed lest it should fade at dead of night—ah!
  Jack Frost (sly elf!) is breathing roguishly
Ghost stories to the storm sash ever brighter;
  So when we wake it seems that fearfully
The stars had dropped their younglings never whiter!

ON THE ETERNAL THEME

Shrouded in mystery is Earth, Sea, Sky,
  The Elements, and else all things beside,
And we are Mystics, even thou and I,
  WHAT, WHEN, and WHERE to know are
    we denied.
Existence and Eternity, how strange
  Friends that ye are ye should be foes at heart!
One Cloudy Phantom do we worship all—
  A trinity of Truth, of Love, of Art;
Yet never *doubt,* O Man, though creeds may change
Divinity's mild visage till it pall
  With hateful thoughts of Torment, Fire, and
    Hell:—
Beauty is but a Seed: thy self extol:
  A haven is where Purity must dwell
For Flesh is but the death-mask of the SOUL.

EARLY AUTUMN

Full dearly do I love to gad a day
  To the Queen's taste in Autumn, redly golden;
  Early, if so it please thee, friend, that olden
Ideas sad from Life's far—far-away,
May take fresh heart in stacks of new-mown hay;
  A still small voice (it is the Cricket's) swelling
  Every now and then the breeze, is telling
What harvest fields apprise a marveling Sun;
The little freshes where wee minnows play,—
  Sheep-sorrel patches,—bullfrogs full of fun
  Ducking in croaking puddles:—these, I say,
These! shall indulge us to our heart's content
Until we quite forget through blandishment,
  The Locust, bent on mischievous foray!

NATURE

Dame Nature hath her poetry—the flowers,
Yet never hot house children, lily and Rose—
Tho' these be beautiful—but rather those
Wild unseen spirits of our sunny showers:
Where whistle Meadowlarks, the larkspur *flowers,*
Cranesbill beneath the Thrush's branches grows,
Where Kingbirds scatter Bees is Wildbrier-rose,—
And red-winged Blackbirds stir the Blueflag bowers;
Whoso loves Nature let him straightway fare
To the wildwoods when the Midsummer Bee
Sucks honeyed Trumpet-blooms; what time the air
Sun-scented, dreams of Autumn: there shall he
Indulge his spirit, feeling unaware
That wilding flowers are Nature's poetry.

SEEN AT THE TIVOLI AFTER THE ST. PAUL TORNADO

I saw two ruins at the Tivoli—
Immaculate and mortal: one, the first
Was that which like a loathsome spectre burst
From out the jumbled wreck: the next was she
Whom I had known in Childhood's Arcady
But scarce might recognize since vice accurst
Had painted both her cheeks:—How Demon! durst
Thou paint blood-red the cheeks of Chastity?
I saw two ruins—Death! and Souls awry:
Bridge square lay drunken marveling at the moon—
Darkly old Mississippi aped the sky
Whiles from a concert hall a voice eftsoon
Squalléd of brighter days—to me that tune
Savored, ye Gods, of Beauty dead, yet nigh!

O HOW I GLORY IN AUTUMNAL DAYS

O how I glory in Autumnal days
  Autumnal dawns and red autumnal Eves!
  For Indian Summer stalks about the sheaves
And counts her wild grapes thro' frosty haze;
For in her sunburnt wreath there rests always
  Summer's sweet flowers, tho faded; ay and leaves
  At whose decease the very sky bereaves
And droppeth tears, tears for departed Mays;
O what a glory is in God's creation:—
  Life, Love and Loveliness, that trinity
Engendered of the spirit bears relation
  Not merely to one dear Divinity
Beyond the stars, but rather to our Nation
  And to all the world it holds affinity.

SEASONS OF DAY

DAWN

Aurora, it is thine this hour of calm!
  This hour belovéd of the earliest muse.
The morning star hath sung his fays a psalm;
  And flowers find nectar in ethereal dews;
Invisible beings shift celestial scenes;
  Eastwards the truant moon stares all aghast
Whereto none else than star-eyed Beauty weans
  Phœbus from Dawn as Phosphor clears the vast.
Blesséd Aurora to thy joys belong
  Glory and Slumber and awaking Dreams;
For thee the Cock crows loud his matin-song,
  As if himself thine own alarm he deems;
For thee the Chuck-Will's Widow all night long
  Whistles and searches over moon-moth streams.

NOON

Illumined Ariel of each predestined day
  Impassioned I have worshipped at thy shrine
And in thy labyrinth have loved to stray
  Absorbéd, rapt, be-dreamed, entirely thine—
Oblivious to all save this, thine hour,
  That wet-browed Labor claims refreshfully,
  Wherever kettle sings and falls a shower
  Of blessings from the Household Gods that be:
Be mine thy friendship, horny handed noon
  Since thou the friend of Ariel must be;
Beside my festive board I bid thee croon
  Jingles that touch the heart, and mightily,
That mock the worldly miser's sordid goal
Poor in the utter poverty of soul!

SUNSET-DUSK

As a Fire-Worshipper I stand and chant
  Thy benediction divine Eventide!
The sun descending, like a martyr'd saint,
  In the West blazing regions; Argus-eyed
The stilly stars that fill Heaven's holy Grail;
  The lights and shadows playing on the sward
Whene'er the moon his cloudy head doth vail —
  And O the thrill of voices forestward!
The sibilant twitterings of drowsy dells;
  The Nightingale whose foreign eloquence
Bids our weird owl hoot not of haunted hells;
  These things speak more than aught of earthly
    sense;—
These speak the Gods and such immortal strains
  As once Endymion heard on Latmos plains.

WHAT A SEA SHELL SAYS

Nor sun, nor moon, but man, hath stayed my reign
In solitudes where awful Secrecy
Holds state; where monsters subterranean
Run riot. Of unreckéd lineage
I boast. Benighted cells profoundly hush
Immure me well withal. Into mine ear
Hath Neptune breathed his hollow precepts much;
Nor do I lack for Beauty: no, not I:—
The Dolphin round a coral cathedral swims
With zest and zeal; and unmolested lie
Numberless jewels, that unstinted wealth,
Cargoed and argosied, which went to wreck;
And happy to record, sea-weed enwreathed
Doth old Oceanus a crown provide.

YANKTON, MY BIRTHPLACE.

Yankton, My birthplace—well I love her streets,
Her stores, her markets, ay, her very houses—
On her, though far away, the memory browses
When backward Time recognizance entreats;
The serious bee that sucks delicious sweets
Hid in the perfume of the wildbrier-roses,
Sucks not more Summer than in him reposes
Whose heart with thine inseparably beats:
For Yankton-on-the-Missouri, in thy spirit
Childhood, the dream, is waking evermore;
The Gift of Life and all it do inherit
Sits, like a bald-pate prophet, at thy door
And though of years am I a score and four
I yet for toys could search the natal garret!

THE POETRY OF HEAVEN IS EARTH'S

The poetry of Heaven is earth's in fact—
  Sweet zones are these where Beauty flower-girl is;
  The maid-in-waiting, Love; those present, viz.:
Bards whose grand genius wonders does enact.
As when alone I scan that wide compact
  Whereon is set the seal of Jove and Dis
  An awful spright enshades me: ever 'tis
My charge for worse or better, mild of tact:—
All-beauteous One, thou makest, as it were
  A flower-bed of my brain wherein I see
  Full many a bud that soon shall blossoms be
O' the which my soul is gentle waterer—
And this, my heart, thou makest, beauteous sir,
  Like to a light load of immortality.

THE MUSIC OF EARTH

Music hath Earth forever new and old,
  Music akin to Heaven's poetry;
  When Twilight dreams with Doves, and haylofts be
Silent save for the cricket—when the fold
Yet hears the pasture's bleat, and from her wold
  The lovelorn Whippoorwill confidingly
  Tells to the stars her tenderest misery
Then hath our Earth a nocturne manifold;
Who wide-awake in Slumber's soothy pillow
  The while doth Dawning hark to chaunticleers
And young Favonius sings a song o' willow
  Hath heard no matins? For him Midas' ears
Were fitter far: for him Apollo's thrill—O!
  Is not, nor is the music of the spheres.

ON FAME AND FATE

Because I dreamt last night I wore a crown
  Of Goldenrod and Poppies intertwined
My brain grew turbulent as billows blown
  In panting gulfs Magellan erst did find,
And waking quite to circumnavigate
  Its zones, its boundaries, its girdles well
  Saw a Volcano rise with Vapors fell
From depths chaotic; these were Fame and Fate;
Fame, that bold siren born of feverish blood,
  And Fate, those circling fumes of red and gold—
  Incentives high!—Beware ye young and old,
The crater lies below, an awful flood—
  Beware, ye young and old: Fame's but a fad;
  What than a worthy name were better had?

LOVELY THE BREEZES THAT HAVE BLOWN EREWHILE

Lovely the breezes that have blown erewhile
  O'er clovered lawns what time the swallows
    sung;
  Lovely the vesper bell, when loud its tongue
To Echo spake: Lovely Milady's smile;
Lovely the skies, for Dian to beguile
  Endymion with dreams hath softly sprung
  Far from her Moon: then back the stars among
To quell them! envious elves! she frowns awhile;
But lovelier far those times, dear cousin May
  When thy sweet voice like to a rose of yore
Breathed blandly of the happy, happy day
  That never shall return; the anguish sore
Felt for a heart at rest:—such thoughts as they
  Thy singing brought, and many others more.

AT MY FRIEND'S GRAVE

Wherefore this pain, this heartache manifold?
This intermittent illness of the soul;
Dimly around me verdurous mounds enfold
The Embryo phantoms. Sombre-sad do toll
My heavy heart chimes. Grief is ever spry:
Who has not seen her lurk within a flower?
Or brush her locks in anguish from her eye;
Or motionless like Silence tell the hour
A mortal grew immortal? What a sigh
Inherits Misery! As in a dream
I contemplate, and isolated seem;
I dare not look where tombs be cold and bare;
I can but guess the Roses, and *his* name:
Beauty is blurred,—imprisoned everywhere!

IF I SHOULD NEVER OPE MY EYELIDS MORE

If I should never ope my eyelids more
As down I lay me to a night's repose
What words, however feeling, might disclose
That spirit which were present heretofore?
Kinsfolk of mine! ye whom I well adore
How might I guess what utterance arose
Deep from your parchéd throats?—Could ye suppose
I viewed, O friends, Life's paradise of yore?
Beloved, my best Beloved, what words were thine
Didst thou, thou guardian angel of my heart,
Resignéd, near this wretched couch of mine
Preside a Psyche? Thus from me apart
I wonder might I, of thy love condign,
Share aught with Death, Belovéd as thou art.

WHAT A SPARROW CHIRPED

Behold me on this maple-tree whose boughs
Sparkle of ice-stalactites—even here
I chirp perennial song—hear ye about
Earth's snowy diamonding? 'tis of my song.
Hear ye about the Year's fresh vernal dawn?
And of its June? And of its wintry moon?
What time the hiving Bee disports himself
In Honeysuckle bells heard ye my song?
Daily ye heard it,—heard it but to say
Thou art despised in general of man:
Yet even so dear is life unto a sparrow,
To me, and to my birdling brood, as that
Which He beyond the Moon and Sun and stars
Conferred on ye, by trick of chance, born human.

ON THE BIRD MURDERERS

(*After seeing a Kingfisher's plumage on a Lady's hat.*)

Accurséd be the murderous hand that slew
  Thee, wingéd fisher of the lakeland stream,
  And such as thee. God grant he well may rue
His deed, who, with an impious self esteem
Kills living Nature and the Poet's dream;—
  Wretches, for mercy should ye sometime sue
On bended knee, what souls ye taught to scream
  Shall plead for ye, and all your hated crew?
No Egret, gunshot, or her perished young,
  No Halcyon like this untimely dead,
No Carolina Paroquet, or tongue
  Of Bullfinch, or birds else, whose blood ye shed,
Nor yet, foul murderers, for ye is sung
  By Vanity aught henceforth in their stead.

TO SOLITUDE

Might I, O Solitude, thy lover be
Not to Earth's dungeons gloomed, where Dis reposes,
Would I repair, but to the green Year's posies—
Nature's repository. Thou with me
Shouldst sit for long, sweet child of sorcery
Where lilacs scent the moonlight—or wildroses
At noon to June the perfuméd sun discloses
Honeyed with bees,—if so it pleaséd thee.
Wide is thy universe O Solitude!
Winter and Summer, Spring and Autumn hours
Guard thee— and Sleep: hence, art thou to be wooed
One needs with thee must seek the sweetest flowers—
June's harebell, August's gentian, skyey-blued,
April's Azalia,—and kindred powers.

RETROSPECTION

Spring's is a bubblesome bird-song—at the drink.
The crazy geese quack in the watery pool;
The boys are marbling to and from Time's school;
And in May's meadows, hark, the Bobolink
Sings what green pebbly brooks would, as I think.—
All-Fool's Day hath each truckled soul a fool;
Out are the Northern Lights;—yet boggy-cool
Easter's blue Pasques with glorious sun-gems wink;
'Tis the green hour of Youth and Love-in-shadows!
What heart alive but breathes the lover's tale?
I hear Night whisp'ring to the weeping willows,
And when the stars Earth's silvery scents exhale,
I hear again what to his Nightingale
Sang Adonais through the Kilbourn meadows.

ON CERTAIN CAVILERS OF MR. RICHARD MANSFIELD

Mansfield, whose genius lifts the Mimetic Art
  Above itself, despite applause and rage
  Has come into his own; nor to assauge
The criticaster's grief shall he depart
Our stage less than a master. Tho' Delsarte,
  Incarnate, fuss and fume; tho' Fustian wage
  War on Minerva's temples, yet do sage
And histrion applaud his mind and heart.
What think ye, Crotchets, to your deathless shame,
  Ye'd war on Life, the multitudinous?
The great good actor lives in deed and name
  A Protean; dies deathlessly—and thus
  When in Time's wings waits the stage Proteus
Where shall ye be whose folly is your fame?

JOHN KEATS

At florid Dawn, when incense borne aloft
  Presages to the blue Heavens Earth's green love,
  A fount I seek, whereby a beauteous Dove
Cooeth, and listens to his distant croft;
Of Helicon, to me, the sacred shrine
  Is mirrowed here, for in the watery glow
  Looks from my book a face whose only woe
Is deathless Beauty's, youthful and benign:
'Tis Keats, Lorenzo of his Basil theme,
  The Porphyro of Eventide and Dawn.
'Tis Keats, Endymion of this, my dream—
  Eternal consort of Hyperion!
  Absorbed I stand as stood in days agone
Narcissus gazing in the vacant stream.

ON WHISTLER'S PAINTING: "THE ANGRY SEA"

This tells me life's worth living after all.
  That tho' Greed sore oppress and Envy goad
  To quick retaliation the uncowed,
The indomitable soul that is withal
Most sensitive among the sons of men—
  Yet he in Art's Valhalla who can paint
  Like to this Master, leaves his very saint
On the trembling temples of the Phidian:
Oh, if ever I have felt Celestialcy—
  The true, the great, the ever handsome might
Of human effort, it was while the story
  Of Genius, struggling like a Child for Light
  Hurled me upon the wild waves hoary-dight,
Breathless, without a thought save that of Glory!

A WILD ROSE

(*Love Song.*)

Take it. A Wild Rose, dear,—from me,
  The darling ensign of a love;
'Tis Summer's gift, and tenderly
  It breathes of thee.

Within its heart, a poem I see;
  Within each petal, dear thy face;
Within its soul, unconsciously,
  Thy grace is free.

But where art thou?—Not here with me?
  I do mistake, for me 'tis Fall—
And Summer's dead. Oh, Misery;
  My visions flee!

THINE ABSENCE

I

A Rose is dying,
A Hope is crying,
A Heart is sighing,
  Love for Thee!

II

The Rose is dead,
The Hope hath fled,
The Heart hath bled,
  For Thee.

III

Oh, Heartless roaming!
Oh, Soulless homing!
Alone in gloaming
I mourn thee!

SLEEPLESS DREAMINGS

Blow, gently blow
Sweet zepher of the night,
And fan my throbbing heart
While I in starry light,
Dream, dream of love.

Swell, music, swell,
Thou melody of eve,
And breathe into my soul
Sad, plaintive songs which leave
The brain in tears.

Smile Stars, O smile,
Ye peaceful elves above:
Bestow a ray of Hope
To nourish dying Love,
And bid him live.

Pale, Moonbeams, pale
And lonely vigils keep;
Obscure the misty cloud
While I in amorous sleep
Dwell with my love!

LET US TO THE DEEP-WOOD WANDER

Let us to the Deep-wood wander
You and I,
While vernal clouds hide sunbeams under,
In the Sky.

Ah my Dian don't stand and ponder
Inert and shy,
O prythee come, love grows the fonder
Tho' we sigh.

Away. I'll wreathe for you, dear maiden
A coronal
Of Bluets, speedwells, all inlayden
With Bluebell!

MAY DAY—1902

'Tis Spring. 'Tis Spring,
The birds awing.
Merrily,
Verily
Sing
Of
Spring.

'Tis Spring. 'Tis Spring,
Flora's awing,
Fairily
Airily
Doth she bring
The flowers o'
Spring!

AUTUMNAL LEAVES

Autumnal Leaves, my Love, are sadly falling;
Theirs the red splendour of a dying day—
And Nature's soul, unites with mine, recalling
A stifled love— a *wilted flow'r of May.*
As through the shaded wood I slowly wander,
A pensive spirit keeps my thoughts apart;
Of leaves, my love, the desolated grandeur
Lends sympathy unto my aching heart,
And now of Nature's grief the very flower thou art!

SOFT GLEAMS

Soft gleams are drowsy this eve,
The Moon nods roguishly,
He peers from out his veil
Rapturously.

Soft gleams tint red the Dawn
The horizon blushes;
The Sun swoons gildingly
O'er meadow rushes.

Soft gleams faint on the Sea
In feeble splendour
The blue waves tremblingly
Breathe music tender.

I DO NOT LOVE THEE—I ADORE!

While golden morn is breaking
While apple blooms are flaking,
While rosy beams are shaking,
I do not love Thee,
Nay, but I adore!

E'en tho' a Rose is fainting,
E'en tho' the air 'tis tainting,
E'en tho' red Grief 'tis painting,
I love Thee not,
No, No, but I adore!

And when the Dusk is pending,
And when the Moon 's attending,
And when the Stars are bending
I do not love Thee,
I—well I adore!

A PANSY FOR THOUGHTS

The flower of my preferment,
I hand thee ere we part;
Exhaling in wilted fragrance,
The breaking of a heart!

'Tis the Pansy sweet, instilling
A cheerless grief in me;
And, AH, when it dies unwilling,
'Tis as my love for thee!

My love which I fain would stifle,
But which o'ermasters me
I give, in the thoughtful Pansy;
'Tis as my love for thee!

THREE SEASONS

With pensive sadness twinéd round my heart,
I silent muse, within a songful bower,
And fain would name Three Seasons of a love
To liken each unto a kindred flower.

First *dawn* of *hope*—the *hawthorn* I declare
The Bitter-sweet for *doubt;* pale *summer's* guest;
For *fall,* a withered astor, as *despair*—
Which breathes the spirit of a fruitless quest!
A fruitless quest!

BEAUTY'S GARDEN

In Beauty's sunlit garden
I ever see a Rose;
Dazzlingly beautiful,
Charmingly dutiful,
It grows.

My heart keeps green this garden,
Nor suffers it to die.
And often dreamily
It conquers beamily
A sigh!

A DECEMBER IDYL

Full glorious the night;
A flood of cold Moonlight
Hovers on crusted snows;
Gently a glad breeze blows
Against My Lady's face:
In manner, ah most meek
Behold her rosy cheek
Glows with a fairy grace
Past all recording;
Certes rewarding
Who loves the lovely ever.
Ah, dearest, who could sever
His gaze from thine?
Harte Mine!
I see thy tresses raven,
With a Moonlit softness paven!

Silvery silver night!
What ghosts of fled Delight
Revivest thou? Fond sleigh
Make once again your way
Thro' wayward driven snows,
Trackless save of the Moon,
Blue-lipped and starry viewn;
In picturesque repose
Remote the dingle
And shadows mingle
With magic fullness lonely:
Whither? I know not, only
Wherever she
Agree
There may we speed and fleetly—
With stars, snow, bells and sweetly!

Painting.

I stood by the side of a fairy-blown fountain
Which trickled its waters on wild Roses red,
While perfumed a spray seemed to float and descend on
Cool mosses which slept in a warm, vernal bed.

Music.

And then came a strain of soft music entrancing
From some hidden sources unknown save of rest,
And saw I a vision of joyous maids dancing
With her quite surrounded whom I love the best.

Sculpture.

O statues, cold figures of classical marble
Ye next, with white Wisdom, came gently to view,
And mute flitting phantoms of Genius did warble
The harsh world's injustice: alas but too true!

Poetry.

And last tho' not leastwise, I saw a poor poet,
Perhaps but a rhymster of slumbering verse;
Enough said, my burthen dear readers, ye know it,—
A plea for the title of this poem terse.

AT THE FULL OF THE MOON

At the full of the moon
The dear, the dutiful
Milady Beautiful
I kissed in silver slumber:
Those eyes of her's like Faun's,
Her cheeks—Venetian dawns:
Ah, could I kiss them, late or soon,
Times without number!

Her voice how silver still!
Her heart, it beats a ditty
Heard but by me and Pity
In silver slumber lying:
Would, would, 'twere ever so!
Those lips my Loveliest—O
Against my own—I thrill!—
They press, replying!

Do, Silence eloquent
Go breathe my prayer to her—
My Heart's sweet slumberer:
From silver sleep absent her:
For I am weak and faint
And thou art my Love's saint;
Sweet Silence, from Heaven sent
Be thou my mentor!

SEPTEMBER

I saw September in her sober bourne
Of tangled grape-vines watching listlessly
The Summer leaves, of living lustre shorn,
And smiling as with mellow sovereignty
Her soft influence turned all hues, forlorn,
She symbol'd sorrow's mutability.

How sweetly sad the interwreathéd gloom
Pervades her chamber; as in sacredness,
Each liege of Flora, they of Summer doom,
Yield up their ghosts, and some be odorous.
The Sunflower, Pickerel weed and other bloom
Upon her altar, immolate their cause!

Immaculate ruin. Enweaved with gold
The foliage gleams. Aurora's silver light
Fades to an afterglow. All uncontrolled
The sense of Languor ebbs into the might
Of Solitude, as may in flowery mould
A Fay be gently lain from peevish sight.

AN AUTUMNAL SERENADE

Sweet Isabelle,
I love thee, dearest, well.
In the leaféd brown of this Autumnal gloaming
My heart at length will cancel its sad roaming,
And thou above
My head art smiling, Love,
I see thy face; festooned, thy tresses flowing:
All beautiful, my Empress, all unknowing,
May I salute thy Roses, Dove?

Brown, golden, red,
Their loveliness unfled
The dying leaves a sweet complaint are utt'ring,—
Now even so my weary heart is flutt'ring:
Thro' tendrils green
I do discern my Queen—
Her hands upon the window sill soft-resting;
The light of love unto my soul attesting
Not vain a Poet's hope hath been.

Ah! Violin
Thy tenderest tones begin:
Let old Romance tell pleasance to this Even;
Mercurial the Moonlight hazes Heaven,
On earth the light
Melts into darkling night:—
Sweet Isabelle, altho' thy name is other
No name, to me, could so well hint another,
For she's a bell of beauty quite.
She *is* a belle, my *heart's!*—the lovely wight!

HYMN TO APOLLO

Magisterial God
Didst thou not hearken well
When mighty Homer's lyre
Thrilled pinnacle and spire
Of Genius? Prithee, tell!

Didst thou not listen rapt
When Milton, golden themed,
Thunderéd sweetly? When
First Shakespere's awful Pen
Wrote blazing thought? When beamed

The fostered Delphic shrine
With luxuries up-piled—
The which one Chaucer cast?
Awoke thy soul aghast
When Chatterton, sad child,

From Bristol's hopeful bourne
His homage tendered thee?
As Shelley sang and Keats
Performéd lyric feats
Apollo, hearkened ye?

Dear Delian Power,
Fair Phœbus of the bow
Full oft have I beheld
The Oracle, while welled
Grecian dreams, Apollo:

And now when I behold
Atop the glowing hill
Thy golden self the shade
Of great God doth pervade
My soul, and how I thrill!

THE YEAR IS A POET

The Year is a poet, as I guess
Various of guises;
His calendar is, more or less,
A bard's—of sweet surprises;
The spring is his love-lyric,
Birds sing its panegyric—
His pastoral is Summer
That Ruby-throated Hummer!
Autumn, spite of minstrelsy
Is his leaf-blown threnody;
And Winter, else than epic, his
Gloria in Excelsis.

HYMN TO THE GODDESS DIANA

All hail to thee Dian
Loved of the Poet clan
Unceasingly:
O long may she
Endure as ages hear
Dearer and yet more dear
A sweet succeeding minstrelsy.

Permit my young desires
To reach thine ears tho' sires
Of glorious verse
Lengthly and terse
From Grecian Isles and Rome
Have sought thy skyey home,
Wingless; whose works the stars rehearse.

Goddess Imperial
Hail to thy conchéd shell!
Hail to thy crown
Of starry down!
And to thee, heavenly One
Lustrous as is the Sun,—
Bright huntress of the starry chase.

The might of mighty bards
Palsies my pen—retards
My dreams. I fail
When Songsters pale
From Britain's lyric land
Sweet-voiced, and grave and grand,
Re-sing—I stutter all—all hail!

SIR VALENTINE AND MADELINE

A Love Lyric

'O how often in the gloam
Darling, have I thought of thee
When the stars were all at home
Round blue Heavens silverly;
When Favonius fell asleep
On some wilding flow'rs—ah me!
Even Silence slumbered deep
When I longed, O Madeline,

Did you smile alluringly
To sign me, your—
Sir Valentine!'

Milady sleeps, poor tired soul!
She sleepeth: Lo, how beautif'ly;
Her graces who would not extol?
She wakes! she wakes! half-drowsily
Neath her casement, one may see
White carnations on her brow;
Pink carnations (sweet they be)
In her cheeks—but woe betide!
One awakens to find now
On one's pillow tear drops dried!

A MUSKETEER THANKSGIVING

At ye hostelry
Straight dismount full merrily
Musketeers of aspect fierce:
Gascons, whose sharp swords have ears.
Grouping proud the table round
Jerkin-buffed, and battle-browned,
These be men full brave I trow,
More courageous live none now.

Wine, Mine Host, fill full the cup.
Wine, '*ma foi,*' ere these men sup,
Wine, the sparkling soul of grape,
A thing of good, of evil shape.
Drink ye all, and all partake
Of game and cold fowl and of cake
While the fireplace nothing slow
Gives the room a roaring glow.

Fades the scene full faraway,
Fades this scene that on a day
  At the tavern *Graces Three,*
  In Perigord, Gascony
Hapt I ween in rich Romance;
Happenéd an age most hence,
  Guardsmen whereso'er ye be
  Think ye yet on Chivalry?

THE SWEETNESS OF WORMWOOD

"Oh, the Sweetness of the Pain!"—Keats.

What of Life,—and what of Death?
What the last expiring breath?
Drinking Beauty, 'spite the Bane—
    Ah, the bitter-sweet of Pain!

Joy was born a healthful child,
Sorrow, jealous, him beguiled;
Hope is lined with Fear's alloy—
    Ah, the saddened heart of Joy!

Anguish smiles, and Laughter weeps,
Mirth is deaf, and Glory sleeps,
Intermingling with the Tear
    Ah, the deadened hope of Fear!

Dost thou hear the Cricket soliloquize
In his snug retreat, at Moonrise?
  I wonder what he says;
Canst thou enlighten me?
I think it well may be:
"I'm free! I'm free! I'm free!
          Always.
I'm wiser far than Man!
Of a delightful day
          I can
Without a thought of *gold,* wander away!"

In the swamp, O hearest thou the frog
Croaking, whilst his shadowy bog
  Echoes right merrily?
I wonder what his speech?
If thou'rt aware, beseech
I you, wise one, to teach
          It me
At once, for weaklings we
May ever learn that the
          Small Bee,
Or Spider, Ant, or Cricket deftly may

Broaden our mental zone; therefore 'tis wise
For us the humble ne'er despise,
  But hearken very well
To voice of every mite.
Thus I suspect that quite
A large degree of sight
          Shall tell
More of God's mystery
So vast, so unconfined!
          And we
May profit much thereby, with soul unblind!

FESTIVAL

Sad is my heart. Approach ye Muses
Cheer me; Come those classic faces!
Sing to me while Daylight loses
Her identity.
While mellow silver traces
Of even hover in the Twilight;
While the Sun sinks beamily
In the couch of flaming Night!
Come bestow your melody.

My soul would rest on Latmos Plains
With Endymion and fair—
Away dank vintage. Distilled drains
Cannot cheer the brow of Care;
Orpheus stroke thou thy lyre.
Grant my uttermost desire
Come, oh come, each welcome guest,
Terpsichore, Calliope,
Erato, and Aphrodite,
Oh, companions, round me cluster,
Let mine eye drink in Fame's lustre,
And be Beauty blessed.
Come ye Nymphs, ye Fauns, ye Dryads,
Come ye Mermaids, and ye Naiads,
Mingle in our melody.
Speed ye Graces to our aid,
Join ye Sylphs from dell and glade
Join our minstrelsy!

Sweetest Hebe toast each guest!
Soothly I am thine confessed!

A FAIRY SONG

I held a Rose,
And the sweet flow'r faded—
Miserere, miserere!
I watched it close
Its petals vaded—
Miserere, miserere;
Why permit it, sweetest Fairy?

I saw a bird;
Its poor wing broken—
Miserere, miserere!
I never heard
A heart more spoken—
Miserere, miserere!
Some cruel boy
Gave sore annoy
This harmless creature, wretched boy!
Miserere, miserere!
Why permit it, lovely Fairy?

I loved a Love,
Which Love she was naughty—
Miserere, miserere!
Lovely as dove,
But as Juno haughty
Miserere, miserere!
Why permit it, pretty Fairy?

The Rose died;
The Bird cried!
But Love it is beautiful still!
And wretch that am I,
Through many a sigh,

At sweet, sombre beauty I thrill!
Miserere, miserere!
Dost thou blame me, dearest Fairy?

SLEIGH BELLS

Jolly, jingling sleigh bells,
In the frosty air,
I listen to your chiming
Through the fields and dells,
And wish that I in rhyming
Might keep a kindred timing,
While sweet my soul was climbing
To pleasures anywhere.

Bells of mirth and music,
Bells of tuneful noise,
Bells forever singing
Praises to St. Nick;
Bells on bob-sleds ringing,
Merry coasters singing,
While the nerves are springing
Healthful, ye rejoice!

How I love the burthen
Flowing from your tongues;
Hurrah for winter glory,
Born of dreamings when
Hearth, and twilight hoary
Old of song and story,
Mingle hues in glory,
While ye vent your lungs!

ELEMENTS, ELFINS, AND ETHICS

An Eclogue.

A Rainbow, Ravonia. A Sunbeam, Beametta.
A Cloud, Clouda.
Rain. Thunder. Lightning.

A Fairy Chorus.

(Beametta and Clouda encounter one another in Elfland, situate in Etheria.)

Clouda:
Fairest Fairy, whither going ?
Beametta:
To the brooklet's silver flowing.
Clouda:
Wherefore make such rosy haste?
Beametta:
Roses plucked go fast to waste.
Thro' thy robe of ebon frail
Darts of brilliances prevail:
Lightning threatens—
Clouda: 'Tis afar,
Never need thee—
Beametta:
In my car
Or chariot of furbished gold
Haste I must; tho' nothing told
Fear is huge when shades appear,
Autumn mists hide Winter sere,
Lurk in ambush ruthless foes
Known of none save salient Woes,

Lurks the Lightning's warning fell,
So, kind fairy, a farewell.

CLOUDA:

Groundless fears
Sighs and tears—

BEAMETTA:

Clouda, I will see thee more
On the sweet Ozonian shore
Built of blossoms freely blown
From Queen Flora's regal throne,
We will breathe in flow'ry breaths,—
Hope alone hath many deaths,
Therefore it is best avoid
Moody thoughts with Anguish cloyed;
Fall these oft to mortal lot
But immortals know them not.
Farewell!

CLOUDA:

(Embrace, and Beametta wings away.)
O fervent spell
Thou art broken—warm thy glance
Fell on golden dalliance.
Ah, I love, and what is love?
Talisman intact above:
Gentler than a cooing dove
To the sense is soothing love:
Words too soft these times belie,
Fearful frowns the darksome sky:
Away! Away!
Nor seek to stay:
Fates are rueing,
Storms are brewing!
(*Flys away*)

Enter THUNDER:

With a crash and rugged roar
Herald I the Stormking hoar,

Vulcan doth his anvil strike:
(Clamor Jove must need belike,)
Jupiter, a javelin
Hurls into the awful din:
Powerful we
Sprites of Terror's minstrelsy!

LIGHTNING:

Add I wreckage to the blast,
Follow ye Rain hosts amassed:
Powerful we
Sprites of Terror's minstrelsy!

RAIN:

Discord wears a winsome smile,
We seem harmless but in guile
Work most direful revelry
As the flood-tides well agree:
Powerful we
Sprites of Terror's minstrelsy!
(*The Elements rage, and fleet before Ravonia and Fairy Chorus.*)

RAVONIA:

Hearken, lovely Elfins, hark.
To Ozonia bends my arc,
Luminous the path and clear
Leads to Faydom, never fear;
Purple, green, the way, and red
By reason of the royal tread
Of goodly Mab and Oberon:
Footprints of the Fairy train
Sinking in the Sun's gold wane
And trackéd thence my plains upon.

FAIRY CHORUS:

Thither, thither will we go
Where leads this, thy beautied bow!

RAVONIA:

Well done

I swear by crown of Oberon!
All that Beauty may avow
Straightway I shall show thee now.

CHORUS:

Follow, follow, where we're bade
Fairies ne'er can be misled,
Follow swift Ravonia dear,
Flutt'ring thro' the heavenly air
Nothing need we fear
To dare,
Love and Beauty's everywhere!

RAVONIA:

Soothly, 'tis a fair response
Off let's hasten us at once.
(*they vanish all; the hues fade*)

(*Shades of Ethics' disciples arise.*)

PHILOSOPHER:

Heard I not a rush of wings?
A ripple from Satanic springs?
Perforce 'twas but a Nightingale
Winging thro' a lonely vale.
Perforce it were an Angel's tear
Dropping down from regions drear:
Fact from Beauty is estranged
When one is 'gainst the other ranged.

PAINTER:

Canvas take a fitting mold.

POET:

My brain is burning—words are cold!
Madly flow my soul in verse!

MUSICIAN:

Softened strains, my lyre, rehearse.

SCULPTOR:

Marble link with Fancy brown.

FAME:

All I give a laurel crown.
Thorns in life shall intertwine
But dissolve when death is thine!

SATANESS

Tho' a wretch perchance I be,
Born of mirth and misery
When the stars for very shame
Fled the night, who is to blame
Demon! that thou hatest me?
Love-sick I am still for thee.

Supplications, vows,—travail,
All had been without avail
Didst thou not at set of moon
To Love's lute thy passion tune:
Then it was, that, flusht and pale
I had died of love and ail.

Come, and ope thy soul to me—
Like the Evening Primrose be;
Come and faint upon my breast
As the Moon to Heaven is pressed:
Come, my Sataness to me—
Oh! I love thee utterly!

FRAGMENT—GENIUS

Genius? Who hath that sacred spark?
The mortal soaring up like lark
Through blue ethereal,
Exploring skyey sites at will—
The poet's province? Or that man
Half crazed, who frets beneath the ban

Of Envy, Malice, Poverty;
For what? That after-ages see
A silver signet? Or is it
The worldly wight, bereft of wit
Who flatters fumblers? Where is bred
This flame divine? Or in the head
Or in the heart? What is the king?
Or conqueror? or anything
A sage or clown betwixt, when realms
Shall sink? when chaos overwhelms
The world; when nears to nothingness
And night this planet? Who may guess?

MAYFLOWERING

Will we go Mayflowering
After this warm showering
Scents the foliage of spring?
Answer Mabel mine.
See, the sun is dowering
Wood and hill, and bowering
Many a bough are birds awing
This day, indeed, how fine!
In the sky a cloud is not,
But a rainbow lingers—what
Dear, prevents our holidaying?
Soothly come, let's go a-Maying
While the hollow of the hills
With a magic glory thrills;
Soothly never answer nay;
Take a basket; we will gather
In this fresh, delightful weather
From the hill, the field, the pool,
Flowers and ferns and grasses cool.

FRAGMENT LIFE

What is life?
Much of strife,
  Many tears—many toys,
  Many fears—many joys,
Much of hope—
  In sun and lightning
Much to grope.

AT SIOUX CITY: PERRY CREEK.

O here near the creek
At hide-and-seek
I could tag my Youth in a green recess
Where the blue-eyed Spring
With her tenderest wing
Reclothéd the desolate wilderness.

Upon the green shore
I could linger more
Till Summer fluttered out of a rose;
Till waft-balls light
Toward Heaven took flight—
And here could I stay till the season's close.

NOVEMBER SONG

The boughs are bare,
And here and otherwhere
Brown leaves lie dead,
  A mantle for the Ice King's tread,
But brave and fair
Do not despair
  For flowers will wed
Another year.

Done is the day
In early deepest gray:
  Anon dull red
  The fiery Sun's great ghost is shed
In skyey grey
Now Nightfall may
  Blot out the red
To cancel day.

Ho, in the glare
From the hearth's fitful fire
  Will cluster we
  While the wild wind moans ghostily
From chimney-where:
To listen there
  High deeds in the
Pages of war.

L'Envoi

Ah, brave and fair,
Do not despair
  For flowers will wed
Another year.

AN ELDEN VALENTINE

A Ballad

When "dauntless Aella fray'd the Dacian foes"

(*Somewhat in the manner of Chatterton*)

One golde redde morne a daie of olde
Whanne maydes were fayre and knyghts were bolde
A lass a letter dydd receive
Fromme her espouséd, Lorde Greneve,
Whyche same she loste ne tyme to rede
For urgente was thatte selfsame nede.
(Therefore she onne the contents fedde)
And gentle reder thys ytte sayde:

"Ladye:
Thys howre I do departe
Fromme warre to clayme mie deare Sweet-
hearte
Fayre Clarimonde, soe tender true,
Soe yonge, soe gracefulle, nobille too;
Fromme bugle blastes and myckle woe
To thee mie thoughts wyth ardour goe.
The warre's ne moe, and soe I leave
For thee, mie Swete—
Thine,
Lorde Greneve."

Whyle whytest lillies rounde her grewe,
And reddest roses, fragraunt too,
A teare of joie felle fromme her eyne
As she softe murmured: "Hearté myne!"

CELESTE

Ballad

An incident in the life of a certain clergyman

Their Wedding Day! How red it dawned!
  How fair the groom, how blond the bride!
  Untrammel'd walked she at his side—
Her joyance past profound!

Of Summer eves, this self-same way
  In languishment they linger'd sweet,
  And read: then homeward bent their feet
When Dusk had won the Day.

Ah me! is ever joy ordain'd?
  Were ever grief impalpable?
  Many a love-tale did they tell,
Of Vesper heard, while waned

This lovely day, and thence repair
  The twain unto the cottage soon
  As hazy twilights of the Moon
Bloomed blue an evening rare.

Without the mansion, Summer flow'rs
  Resignéd fragrance to the breeze;
  Within the murmurous ecstacies
Told of young nuptial-hours!

As in a wakeful dream he hears
  Her gentle voice, nor swerves his gaze
  From her's. He seems to hear in 'maze,
The music of the spheres!

Would I might leave them haply so!
  But it were vain to hope such bliss
  Upon a planet cruel as this
Where Joy, seen close, is woe.

Oft is it proved, and proved full well
  The serpent hisses in the Rose,
  The red Sun hides the Cloud morose,
The Ugly freights the beautiful!

Ah, bride and groom so soon to be,
  Thy nuptial rites are still afar,
  They'll fade as Hesperus, sweet star
Sinks in the skyey sea!

* * *

"Where is the bride? Celeste my bride?
  My throat is parchéd,—cannot speak!
  A moment since at hide-and-seek
She left! Where is the bride?"

In consternation, faces 'ghast
  They pause, then institute a search
  And bright the Moon, celestial torch,
Aids till the Night is past.

With morn full wild the bride-groom haunts
  A dingy room, where is a chest:
  He calls her name: "Celeste! Celeste!"
And fancies a response.

Cold moonbeams sleep within the hall.
  He listens! Did she moan? or sigh?
  Is't but a fancy? O I'd die
This anguish to forestall!

Of others, he betimes is sought—
"'Twas but a chimera forlorn:"
Anew they search till starless morn
And find the lady not!

Goeth the servant to convey
The silver service to the chest:
Draweth the lid: "O sweet Celeste!
Woe! Woe! betide this day!"

Quickly she summons searchers all,
And there—O horrid to expound!—
In chest, her bloodless body found:
The groom seemed like to fall!

Speechless as marble cold he stood
Over the wretched iron-bound chest
And in death's beauty, bridal drest,
The hapless bride he view'd!

Pallid as ivory in thrall
Absent he murmur'd half aloud:
"Thus is the bridal gown her shroud!
The bridal rose her pall!"

BEAUTY

Where was Beauty born, sweet Beauty?
She was born of Love and Duty,
Nor on earth, in Lark-a-Day,
Elysium, nor Arcady—
But a time when Sun and Moon
Met at Jove's high court: 'twas noon.
All the Fairies danced—the dears!—
To the music of the spheres—
The Three Graces, too, were present,

As was Cupid adolescent—
Yea, the whole of Fairydom
To that meeting-place was come
Where the clouds shone clear as morn,
Where sat daylight stars sun-scented,
There was darling Beauty born:
But a kiss of Love conceived her—
Phœbus and Dian received her
As their own—the Nymph consented.

Such was her immortal birth,
Yet on this, our pleasant earth,
Like the spirit that she is
Many births hath she: what bliss
To discover them, each one—
Sooth, 'twould take a Protean
Half his days but to commence;
There she is: the darling child!
Her manner meek, a redolence
Clinging to her tresses wild—
O could shepherd Pan behold her
All his flocks he would forget,
All the Dryads,—every pet
Might he neglect to once enfold her
To his breathless heart: she's gone
Even as a startled Faun:
Follow to the wildwoods, follow!
Culling flowers in the hollow—
Like to Ceres' Prosperine
At Enna—yes, but she'll not stay
For any Pluto, be he fine
As silk, to spirit her away!

There she is: the darling child!
Ever thoughtless! ever wild!

On her brow are Easter lilies,
And Pansies that in Paradise
Grow as wild as Daffodillies
Do on earth—there! in a trice
She hath darted: follow, follow!
Ride thee on the wings of Swallow,
Or on those of Butterflies,
Else that blue-eyed Beauty hies
Far from thee and human ties—
O follow! follow! follow!

There she is: If thou hast flown
In swift pursuit thou tarriest now
At her bounds, a mighty zone
That girdles Earth and Heaven,—How
Beautiful is Beauty smiling!
Every loveliness is here.
Her time away each Sylph is whiling,
Yet Time but fades to reappear—
Here are rainbows beautier
Than ever Science scattered afar;
Here are sights that sages hoary
Never dreamed of in all their glory:—
Yet their texture intermingles
With what Earth hath: twilight ingles,
Bird-choirs hymning seasons three,
The Ghost of winter ecstacy!
St. Jacob's ladder on the Skies,
And Milky Ways to Paradise,
And St. John Evangelist's
Seven gold candlesticks, and mists
That heavenly be: all these and more:
Shadows of sweet scents, the roar
Of noiseless cataracts,—the boon
Surpassing all, when Summer's moon
Sings silver music to the stars—

Such-like is what Beauty brings
Down from Heaven—wordless things!
Such her texture is. When bars
Skyey and dark drop sultry rains;
When in twilight window panes
Looks a sunset face; when sire
And Household hug the drowséd fire;
When the bankéd house is warm
Listening to the frozen storm;
Or, when Circus comes a day
And Childhood wakes with Dawning grey—
Then hath Beauty that sweet miss
Lurked unseen, O there she is!

Like as blown soap-bubbles burst,
All their mirages dispersed—
Like as th' iced frost-crystal fadeth
When its pane Apollo raideth—
Like as wilted flowers when their
Souls have flown into the air—
So is Beauty come and gone,
Elusive, changeable as Dawn.

Many times as by design
Whether rain or whether shine,
Tho' Autumn acorns lie around
Fallen upon a frosty ground;
Tho' our earth be in a spell
Where the sleety hailstones fell,
Hath that Beauty, peerless miss!
Lurked unseen, O there she is!

There she is; no birdy *brogue*
Beside the Bluejay's,—pretty rogue,
Shall she hear.—The Thrush hath flown
Sometime since to a sunnier zone;

Oriole no more is heard,
Nor Ruby-throated Hummingbird;
Whistling Meadowlark is seen
No more, nor on the evergreen
Purple Grackles squeak: heigh ho
Beauty is Thought, Thought flieth—O!

Thrasher thrashes now no tail,
Finch he stayeth not, and frail
Summer Wren, she shaketh not;
Sooty chimneys smoking hot
Hide no Swifts; no Yellowhammer
Digs in search of ants; the clamor
Of English Sparrows fills the air,—
Yet here's Beauty everywhere.

Red-head-Woodpeck beaks no tree;
Black-billed Cuckoo elsewhere cooeth;
Chewink says no tow-hee-hee;
Pewee plaineth not nor rueth;
Vireo no longer wingeth
Here, nor Vesper Sparrow singeth
His evening vespers; Wild Canaries
Would scorn these forkéd shrubs: none tarries.
Tho' these birds they all have flown,
Beauty never is alone.
Redpolls, Juncos, Snowflakes she
Loves, and the Blackcapped Chickadee.—
Here she lingers—off she flies—
Restless child—O there she lies
Asleep in flowers! O, lovely, she
Many a time hath come to me:
Disguiséd once she broke my slumbers
Whispering in mine ear such numbers
As would weave a diadem
For me, could I remember them!

"Thou art but a youth" says she,
"I the Muse of Minstrelsy"—
Said she'd teach me all of glory
Did I listen to her story;
Said—I waked—but lovely She
When first I saw her I resolved
That, whatsoever it involved,
Soon a poet I should be.

SIBYL SONG

False-heartedly I
Alluring lie
In wait for victims many:
I woo rare and sigh—
They do, dare and die,
For too well 'tis known that a sibyl I
Have not of pity any.

My kisses breed shame!
My embrace the same!
My passion engulfs the unwary:
My love is a flame
Devouring nor tame—
The daughter true of Glory and Shame
I am a demon fairy.

How sweet is my smile!
How subtle my wile—
O often I goad men to madness
And that which is vile
I love all the while;
Seductive am I of veriest guile
Nor given much to sadness.

Tho' strange it may seem
Awake in a Dream
Some call me siren Circe—
And other folk deem
Me (while I scream
Of caverns tawdry, of lightning agleam)
La Belle Madame Sans Merci!

ROMANTICISM

Are those days forever fled?
Of Romance the heralded?
Shall we never see them more
Gallantly as heretofore
Echo non-complying?
Gypsies in the brown yestreen
Dancing to the tambourine:
Echo un-replying?—

* * *

Days of Outlawry if ever
Ye pass current fright us never—
For 'tis nothing but the name—
Outlawry, and dear to Fame:
Come, my friend the hearth-stone by
Snugly, while a warméd die
From the kindly coals attend us
And the room in shadows send us
On a voyage far away—
Thou, too, Fancy, say me yea.

Shift the scene to Sherwood old,
Marian and Hood behold
Indolencing like as when

L OF C.

Quite surround by Morris Men
They made merry one and all—
Is Tradition but a pall?

Shift the scene: knight errantry
Buds and bursts in flower,—see
The feudal castle: Lady Vain
A 'kerchief flaunts—with might and main
Two contestants, sword and shield,
Battle wage: may Sir Knave yield!
These bear bravely, but for all
Is Tradition but a pall?

Shift the scene: in royal courts
The Troubadour himself disports
Wedding Music unto Verse—
Is Tradition but a hearse?
Ah! and darling Chatterton
Dauntless antiquarian—
Woe is me; my eyes grow dim
How Tradition handles him!

Shift the scene: D'Artagnan follows
With the Guardsmen Three; and wallows
In a bloody pool the Don—
O that bullfights were all gone!—
'Mid a clash of ringing steel
Feudal lords make woe and weal—
Shift the scene: there's Cyrano
'Gainst a hundred men, or so—
Glory! what a parlous sight!
Old Tradition; where's your light?

* * *

Archers, can ye bear your part
Before old Richard Lion Heart?—

* * *

Guelph and Ghibelline, adieu:
Are there plenty more like you?—
Like Rob Roy? Like Roderick?
Like Magregor—ye Scotch clique?
Like "The Cid?"—and Spanish henchmen?
Like Villon and fellow Frenchmen?
Like the lovers Rimini?
Yes! and tho' they needs must be
Few perhaps and far between,
Them Tradition's hand shall wean
From the present for the morrow:
Therefore let's not say with sorrow
Days of Chivalry are flown
Idyllic Brigandage (?) unknown
Tho' the Crusades are past history
And the Morris Men are mystery—

But come, let's think full hard upon
And discuss it pro and con:
Echo un-replying?
Echo non-complying.

ON COMING ACROSS A BLUEBELL IN A SEPTEMBER RAMBLE

Wherefore did Summer leave thee alone
Brave Bluebell-flower unless it be
That tho' to Flora she was flown
She yet would hear thy constancy
Ring out, albeit saddishly?

Fame, like a star at noon is unseen
But comes it late to glorious power.

Such is thy answer as I ween
Thou pretty little gritty flower,
Thou to whom Autumn shows her dower.

AT THE DEATH'S-HEAD

A Ballad

At the Death's-head
  Beside old Cross-bone Inn—
Where ghosts and spectres revel
The livelong night with the devil,
  I drunk the Wine of Sin!

At the Death's-head
  Ye Gods! what ghoulish glee,—
One sat as still as ouzel
Whiles madmen in carousal
  Shriekt love as hate may be!

At the Death's-head
  Some daggers flasht o' moon—
Lo! and behold! how bloody!
Dark deeds and Passions ruddy
  Have happened long agoon!

THE MONTHS: LIFE'S CALENDAR

January is a jewel
Sparkling on Milady Cruel;
February, sweetheart mine,
Is—dear me—a Valentine!
March as lion or as lamb
Roars and bleats, a double sham;
April, little Easter fool
Primps and trots to Sunday-school;

May is a flower-girl—pretty May
Often with her I've gone to play;
June is a love-song, so I've read,
June is a dove-song, mote be said;
July 's a patriot, and a Polly
Prating speeches full of folly;
August—August what art thou?
A plough-boy dreaming of the plow?
September—ah, how can I miss you?
Come, sweet bride, and let me kiss you.
Old *October* runs his swale
Drunken with brown October ale;
November—she is naught save Death,
And Dissolution—but *December*
Is a Star who witnesseth
And endeth this, our Calendar.

TOAST FOR NOEL

All hands around
And to the sound
O' crackling logs and clinking glasses
We'll pledge your cause
O Santa Claus!
We lords and lasses.

All hands around!
And while from Sound
Night's frozen wheels to Silence run,
We'll say with him,
Youth's Tiny Tim:
God bless us, every one!

EASTER VILLANELLE

Here are Lilies, Darling, yellow and white—
  Wilding lilies, lilies tame—
Which shall you have for Easter night?

Says the wilding lily: I come, a spright
  Weaned from a watery moon, sweet dame:—
Here are Lilies, Darling, yellow and white.

Says the lily tame: From Heaven's height
  On a martyr's pinions to earth I came:—
Which shall you have for Easter night?

Which shall you choose, and which shall you slight?
  The lily wild or the lily tame?
Here are Lilies, Darling, yellow and white.

Lilies from ponds all moony bright!
  Lilies from greenhouses fair of fame!
Which shall you have for Easter night?

Easter hath all but taken flight!
Yet still I linger and more's the blame.
Here are Lilies, Darling, yellow and white;
I wreathe them together, and so—good night.

A BLEAK WINTRY DAY

(*A Dirge*)

The North wind is sighing,
And snow clouds are flying—
  Flying away;
The sparrows are winging,

And drearily singing
A noisy lay.

The frost trees are weeping,
As green buds are sleeping,
All frozenly;
Nature seems dreary,
And soulfully weary—
Weary, today.

Across the white clearing,
A weak Sun is peering
In mockery,
'Tis like dull Hope, mourning,
In heart which forlorning
Thinks not of May.

Ah, so let our pining
In soul which resigning
Greets misery—
Choose yet a day clinging
To sorrow, and bringing
Melancholy.

And in the white Gloaming
While Fancy is roaming,
Abroad with her doom
On cold bleak Mooncresting
We'll lay Grief a-resting;—
Snowbound her Tomb!

IN SOOTH—LA

In sooth—la—
In youth—ah!—
I met the sweet Sadie.

Than Ruth—ah
Or Leutha
Was fairer this lady

Or Petrarcha's Laura!
But, like sweetest Flora,
This lady was fadey

And—ah!

Since youth—la
In sooth—ah!
I miss my sweet Sadie.

GREED

He crawls coward in his hut
And the rusty hinges shut
A creaking door:
Within he counts a store
Of worldly usury;
His form is gaunt,
His cheeks are hollow,
Stares he on vacancy
With horrid ecstacy:
And counts, as is his wont
The scornings of Apollo!
Not mental free is he,
But grisly thoughts, rebellious to extol,
Are vassals of his craven soul!

OF CHILDHOOD REMINISCENT

Glory and Gloom attends the man who wends across
a field
His footsteps reminiscent, whose heart is Youth's
revealed.
For him is life a labyrinth, and insofar as dreams
Wing the immortal spirit, his soul like sunlight
beams:
But great the change that may be wrought within
too few short years,
And great the cold rejoicings, and great the truant
tears;
Such inward satisfactions and such outward pangs
are his!
Such joyant recollections and such motley miseries!

You scare grasshoppers at your feet, you startle
gnats away.
From your invasion flees the bee; in quest of holiday
The dragonfly betakes himself flicking a lucent
wing,
While in the airy blue treetops the guests of Sum-
mer sing.
The Indigo, the Vireo, and Purple Finches—*red,*
Awake betimes, melodiously, the memories long
since fled.
Anon in an abstraction gone, you rest, and round
your home
Childhood is strange and sportive, and you a youth
unknown.

Unknown the school will stare at you; you pause
before its gate;
Inside are growing on the lawn the flowers which
you elate

In former days made customary. Bells are silent now;
Silent the Chalk, silent the Slate, silent the Playgrounds—How
Now, how now, thou trickster, Time, durst thou revivify
Pale Deathless Youth, before Death's scythe? Who with a tearless eye
Beholds thee and conjures? O Time where is that loving friend
Who, in the dawning halycon, did this same school attend?

Roundly the sun is setting red behind an ebon cloud
Whose edge is robed with garish gold—were even such my shroud!
A little of bright brilliance, a little of gross gloom,
A little of sad sweetness may well become a tomb:
Amen. The Swift his chimney seeks, the Nighthawk preys thro' all
The skyey incandescences;—and Night is Twilight's pall.
Homeward I wend my footsteps. O, a Youth, at Dusking's hour
I'd grow insensate gradually, and die as dies a flower.

YE DAYS OF CHIVALRY

Now uplifts the baron old,
Aloft the goblet done of gold,
And withouten formal rites
Toasteth he the gallant knights
Faméd high in heraldry:
Now the halls ring revelry,
Rises full a rugged shout,

Swells the room with noble rout:
Shines on high the grape's ripe juice
Held by him in Honor's truce;
Happened this full long ago,
Else my pen might never know.

HALLOWE'EN

A Triolet.

I'll try a triolet
On Hallowe'en, the grandam's plague,
When spooks and goblins fret,
I'll try a triolet
When weird ghost children pet,
(Your utmost leniency, I beg)
I'll try a triolet
On Hallowe'en, the grandam's plague.

TO MISERY

Wherefore tease me
Misery?
Come and sit upon my knee;
We're friends indeed—
And 'tis my meed
To entertain thee, Misery.

Ah tell to me
Misery,
Tales of Sorrow, merrily:
A sad—sweet ditty
Heard but by Pity
When she listens, Misery!

Well I love thee,
Misery,
Never jealous need ye be:
My heart is bleeding
And only heeding
Art thou now sweet Misery.

Ah let me see
Misery,
Thy lips to my lips presséd be.
Smile thro' thy tears,
For it appears
Tear drops are Grief's rosary!

IN RE ROBIN HOOD

Where's romantic Robin Hood,
The brave, the bold, the robber good?
Where's Maid Marian the fair,
She of Amazonian air?
Whither now, Romance, this twain?
Ye have known their rise and wane,
Known their haunts of rural glory
Breathéd oft in song and story;
With them ye have supped and dined
With them ye your pledge have signed
That their prowess still may be
When no more is yeomenry;
Ye have drunk their old brown ale
At the tavern table hale;
When the smoking, viands glistened
Then to daring deeds ye listened:—
Yo ho! for Robin Hood! yo ho!
Let all Romantic bugles blow!
And let every clarion
Sing the praise of Marian!
Yo ho!

Yo ho, for Sherwood forest green
And red with Autumn skies serene;
Yo ho, for all ye Merry Men
In grené shaw and woody glen,
Who made the Middle Ages dear
To the heart of Romancer.
Robin Hood! O, here's to you!
To you Maid Marian and true.
Here's to you, O Tuck the Friar
And to your crackling kettly fire.
Here's to you Alan-A-Dale
And with the brown October ale!
To you, Will Scarlet; Little John;
To the Merry Morris clan;
Nottingham and Durden Dame:
(Sheriff? Gods defend the same!)
Guy of Gisborne, here's to you!
All I drain the dregs unto.
Merry, Merry be for aye,
Ever gladsome, ever gay
    Bugles, bugles, blow, blow, blow,
Lives Romance in forests lorn
Where is wound the mellow horn,
    Yo ho! Yo ho! Yo ho!

HESPERIDES: RESOLVE

Ill-starred it might have been
Had Hercules foreseen
  Its magnitude:
Ourselves are much at fault
In that o'er things occult
  We cause much feud,—
Not so with Hercules,
  His path he knew
  Eventually led to
The gold Hesperides.

TWO FRAGMENTS

Death.

Death, what are thou? What thy pang?
When to die is but to wake
The sunder'd spirit, and to slake
The thirst for immortality?

Hope.

Ring-dove of dusking, warm,
Murmur to me when anguishing
I cannot see thy form,
Or hear thy gentle wing.

THE FOUNTAIN OF YOUTH

Let us hence, I implore
  To the fountain of youth
To drink evermore
  The elixir in truth!
Poncé de Leon
  Of night or of dawn
Full free from travail,
  Assuredly sooth,
Or burthen or ail
  To the fountain of youth
Let us hence, I implore
To dwell evermore!

TO HOPE

Come Hope, let's both go foolishing—
A-foolishing say I
For wise-men are as fools,
And fools are as wise men—
Ahem!
Let's not consort with them,
But we will both go foolishing:
It's ho, for the merry eye!
And it's ho for the merry nose.
It's ho for the merry sigh,
And it's ho for the merry toes—
Come Hope, let's both go foolishing,
A-foolishing, say I.

SOMETIMES IN DUSK I WEEP, I KNOW NOT WHY

Sometimes in dusk I weep, I know not why
Like a dark Cloud beneath the frowning Sky
Or a bright Rainbow dissipated all,
Or as a Starbeam laid in twilight's pall;
I weep, and would atone
To thee, Great God, alone,
For weaknesses and sin!

THE DRAGON FLY

Perseus of eld
As I beheld
A winging Dragon Fly
This morning, I
Bethought myself,
I know not why
(For 'tis a harmless elf)

Of the fierce Dragon-head
Vanquishéd
In mythologic tale
When heroes hale
Braved foe afield in coats of mail!
But ah, light wingéd Fly
Thou hast a mission high
To feed on noxious prey
Each sun or sunless day.

WHILE MOONBEAMS FLOAT IN AUTUMN AIR.

A Rondeau.

Adieu, Sweet Love, the hour grows late—
Ere I have fled the garden gate
I fear, I fear upon my soul
We shall have misst the golden goal.

Which golden goal? Why that of Love
Whose sweet insignia is the Dove.
Excess makes vapid, I'll renew
Another time this quest: adieu.

Adieu, and hence me I shall fare
While Moonbeams float in Autumn air,
And waft September's zoning through
The parched red leaves: Dear Heart, adieu.

Adieu, Dear Heart, but ere I go
Kiss this dear Clematis, and O
Bathed by the winking gems of dew
'Twill be my Rosary,—adieu!

LOVE VERSES

While away from thee
I sigh my dear;
Tho' thou afar mayst be
Yet art thou near!

As Moon is to night,
As Sun to day,
Unto my famished sight
Thou art alway.

If thou smil'st or no,
Thine image seems
To keep my heart aglow
With divers dreams.

Ah me, dear love, I
Mingle with chimes:
Adieu, wert thou but nigh
Ere cooled my rhymes!

SYMPATHY

Why look so saddish, Sweetheart Mine?
Why wipe away a Tear?
Why seek an interview with Grief,
When Joy is waiting near?

Sadness is beauty, so they say,
Sorrow, the rich heart's gold;
But Love, thou art so beautiful
That Beauty's self seems cold.

Do smile a little, Fairest One,
Though Tears are blessed by thee,

A smile betokens restful Hope:
The treasured memory!

A Smile I'd call a message sweet
Unto the heart of Love;
A message writ in every beat;
I swear it by the Dove!

Each Tear of thine, awakens throbs,
Responsive in my heart;
Each one, I fancy, is a Care
Which holds a hidden Dart!

Then subjugate those traitor Tears,
And bid them,—bid them flee;
Or if thou must in Sorrow, dwell,
Oh, let me dwell with thee!

THE POET'S FRIENDS

Who are the Poet's friends;
His friends inanimate?
Are not the ocean glens—
The flagged black birded fens—
His friends?

Are not the wild Spring flow'rs
Dew-fed, upon the sward;
The Bee in cellful bow'rs;
The Breeze, the warm sun showers
Intimate powers?

Are not the amorous Cloud;
The slumberous tinkling Dell;

Sweet Spring with May-blooms bowed;
Mild Autumn in sober shroud—
    Companions proud?

Are not the gold-faced Morn—
The Moon with resplendent glance—
The Stars which Dusk adorn—
Dame Grief with smile forlorn—
    His comrades born?

Answer me Muse, 'tis true;
Lend me encouragement;
Swear by the Sky's deep blue,
Swear by the Rainbow's hue
    His friends aren't few!

A PICTURE

Not quite a rogue, nor yet a slave
  A youth was he whom Heaven prized.
Nor harsh, nor stern his *soul* forgave
  Many a man his *heart* despised;
Loving he was, yet no one knew
His spirit. For renown he never crew
  Nor sought the Public ear
  With sayings insincere.

A kiss?
'Tis a feast supernal—
A banquet spread eternal
By Eros' self. The kernel
Of utter bliss;
The flitteréd pure quota
From honey-dew, and O the
Light effervescent soda
Compound of lusciousness!

A kiss?
'Tis the soul's excrescence—
The heart's hid iridescence—
The sight concealed, from whence
All beauty is.
The core of happiness,
When mutual spirits bless
True Love's sad wilderness,
And sip the brimming chalice!

A kiss?
'Tis a Rose by gold Dusk tended,
A cloud in Dawning's glow, suspended,
A daisy by the dewdrop bended
Felicitous;
Green foliage kissed Autumnal,
Tree tops which the zephers thrill,
The pale Moon silvering the rill,
Exemplify the kiss.

THE ISLE OF LOVE

Oh, let us float within a boat
Upon a sea of kisses
Our oars *of speech;*
And in Love's reach
A madrigal of blisses.

To cyprian coves, where Amor roves
Inclines our destination:
On an isle of isles
Erect of smiles
Our castle, w'thout cessation!

We'll eat of fruits, and fragrant roots
Gathered in Cere's garden—
And O the breeze
The flow'rs, and trees
Shall be our forest Arden!

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